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The Relationship Between American Media Exposure and Trinidadian Female Adolescents' Body Image Satisfaction

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The Relationship between American Media Exposure and Trinidadian Female
Adolescents' Body Image Satisfaction

by

Clarabelle Ferguson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
School of Mass Communications
College of Arts and Sciences
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Background of Study	2
Statement of Problem	7
Rationale	9
Importance of the Study	11
Overview of Study	12
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
History of Women’s Ideal Body Image	13
Traditional Body Image Perception among Caribbean Females	16
The Thin Successful Female vs. the Voluptuous Successful Female	19
Media Influence on Women’s Reaction to Body Self-Image	22
Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance (Awareness, Internalization, Pressures)	23
Theoretical Framework	27
Media Imperialism Theory	27
Cultivation Theory	42
Social Cognitive Theory	46
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH HYPOTHESES	50
Rationale for Hypotheses	50
Hypotheses	51
CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY	53
Sample	53
Research Design	54
Instrumentation	54
Design of the Study: Operationalization of Variables	55
Data Analysis	59

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS	61
Respondent Profile	61
Data Examination	62
Hypothesis 1	65
Hypothesis 2a	68
Hypothesis 2b	71
Hypothesis 2c	74
Hypothesis 3a	77
Hypothesis 3b	78
Hypothesis 3c	79
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION	82
American Media Exposure and Body Image Satisfaction	82
American Media Exposure and Three Risk Factors	84
Three Risk Factors and Body Image Satisfaction	87
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	91
Limitations of the Study	92
Suggestions for Future Research	93
Recommendations	96
REFERENCES	97
BIBLIOGRAPHY	116
APPENDICES	119
Appendix 1: Consent Form	120
Appendix 2: Survey	121

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	AVM television station schedule	36
Table 2.	TTT television station schedule	37
Table 3.	CCN television station schedule	38
Table 4.	CNC3 television station schedule	39
Table 5.	TV6 television station schedule	40
Table 6.	CNMG television station schedule	41
Table 7.	Descriptive Statistics: Respondent Profile	61
Table 8.	School Frequency	62
Table 9.	Class Frequency	62
Table 10.	Ethnicity Frequency	63
Table 11.	Descriptive Statistics: American Media Exposure	63
Table 12.	Reliability Statistics	64
Table 13.	Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure & Body Image Satisfaction	66
Table 14.	Model Summary: American Media Exposure & Body Image Satisfaction	67
Table 15.	Regression Results: American Media Exposure & Body Image Satisfaction	68
Table 16.	Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure & Awareness	69
Table 17.	Model Summary: American Media Exposure & Awareness	70
Table 18.	Regression Results: American Media Exposure & Awareness	71

Table 19. Correlation Matrix:	American Media Exposure & Internalization	72
Table 20. Model Summary:	American Media Exposure & Internalization	73
Table 21. Regression Results:	American Media Exposure & Internalization	74
Table 22. Correlation Matrix:	American Media Exposure & Pressures	75
Table 23. Model Summary:	American Media Exposure & Pressures	76
Table 24. Regression Results:	American Media Exposure & Pressures	77
Table 25. Correlation Matrix:	Awareness & Body Image Satisfaction	78
Table 26. Correlation Matrix:	Internalization & Body Image Satisfaction	79
Table 27. Correlation Matrix:	Pressures & Body Image Satisfaction	80
Table 28. Model Summary:	Awareness, Internalization, Pressures & Body Image Satisfaction	81
Table 29. Regression Results:	Awareness, Internalization, Pressures & Body Image Satisfaction	81

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Hypotheses Model

52

ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have examined the development of body image among people, especially girls and young women. Many factors have been associated with the development of body image dissatisfaction. Especially important are exposure to mass media and its relationship with three theoretical constructs: Awareness of a thin ideal, internalization of a thin ideal, and perceived pressures to be thin. Extending existing research, this study examined through experimentation the relationships among exposure to American media content and the awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, pressures to adopt these norms, and Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction. Based on previous findings, this study hypothesized that the three risk factors in the development of body image disturbance (awareness, internalization and pressures) would mediate the relationship between American media exposure and body image satisfaction among Trinidadian female adolescents. The results indicated that American media exposure and all three risk factors had statistically significant relationships with Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction. The more hours Trinidadian female adolescents spent watching American sitcoms, the less satisfied they are with their body image. An increase in American media exposure also resulted in the increase in the adolescents' awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, as well as the pressures to adopt those norms and expectations. Results also revealed that the three risk factors in the development of body image disturbance (awareness, internalization and pressures) were negatively correlated with body image satisfaction among Trinidadian female adolescents. Taken as a whole, the study supported the sociocultural model for the development of body image dissatisfaction.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A large volume of research focuses on the intended and unintended effects of mass media messages on individuals. However, researchers tend to place more attention on the study of unintended effects than on the examination of intentional effects (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Academic and non-academic researchers analyze the media's method of depicting drug use, drinking alcohol, and smoking as glorified behaviors. As a result, certain scholars studying this topic attribute low morale and eating disorders among adolescent girls and women to media's portrayal of glorified thin body images (Malloy & Herzberger, 1998). The media constantly promotes the image of thin models and actresses in popular television programming, magazines, advertisements, and movies (Taylor et al, 1998; Borzekowski et al, 2000; Tiggemann et al, 2000). Theorists and researchers argue that the media's influential and constant linkage of thinness to beauty and success has a widespread and adverse effect on body image satisfaction among women (Chafe, 1991).

Despite the media's constant effort to portray slenderness as a necessary component of superior beauty, many Non-Western societies equate voluptuous, full-figured bodies with health, prosperity, beauty, fertility, and social status (Villarosa, 1994). Furthermore, the African Diaspora has traditionally exhibited a defiance to the Western European and North American thinness oriented norms and values (Shaw, 2006). In some cultures, women with higher body fat are seen as more prestigious and beautiful because greater body fat indicates access to food and other resources (Brewis &

McGarvey, 2000; Craig, Swinburn, Matenga-Smith, Matangi, & Vaughan, 1996; McGarvey, 1991; Wilkinson, Ben-Tovin, & Walker, 1994). For example, among the Annang cultural group that lives in Southeastern Nigeria, there is a custom called the Fattening Room. This room is used as a retreat, before a significant social change in a person's life, for example, a wedding. The bride stays in the fattening room and eats large quantities of food to make her gain weight, to become a plump and beautiful bride (Brink, 1989). In Fiji, strong and voluptuous bodies were traditionally considered exquisite, and people ate heartily at all times (Becker, 2004). In addition, in the West Indian society, overweight bodies have been associated with abundant health and wealth (Hoyos & Clarke, 1987).

When countries become industrialized, and increase contact with Western nations, traditional norms and values fade away (Strelitz, 2004), and they become exposed to two factors known to be associated with body dissatisfaction. These factors include rapid social change, especially changing roles for women, and exposure to Western media's ubiquitous portrayals of thin females. Eventually, these countries may lose some of the social norms that have traditionally protected women from experiencing body dissatisfaction (Becker, 2004; Levine & Smolak, 1998; Silverstein & Perlick, 1995; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999; Wolf, 1991). As a result, it is important to study the relative levels of body image satisfaction among women from nations that experience rapid social change.

Background of Study

Research on body image has an extensive and rather interesting history, with rapid growth over the past two decades (Fisher, 1986, 1990; Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002). A number of factors affect body image dissatisfaction among women (Thomas, 1989).

Some of them include the media, parents, peers, and sociocultural factors. The mass media are present in every facet of people's lives. Magazines and newspapers are filled with advertisements for products that claim to make women lose weight, and improve their skin texture to make them look younger, more beautiful, and sexier. When women spend many hours viewing different forms of media that portray idealized images of models, it may cause a decrease in their body image satisfaction (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002). In addition, researchers argue that parents' negative comments about body image can affect how young girls develop levels of body image satisfaction (Thomas, 1989). Parents are influential in supporting societal messages and conveying such messages to their children, specifically their daughters. When both parents encourage their daughters to lose weight or make negative comments about their appearance, there is a greater impact on children's body image development and awareness (Thomas, 1989; Wertheim, Mee, & Paxton, 1999). Friends and peers may also be responsible for children's development and awareness of body image dissatisfaction. When peers tease children, this may heighten their concerns about physical appearance and encourage them to develop unhealthy eating habits (Tantleff-Dunn & Gokee, 2002). Other contributing factors to body image dissatisfaction include ethnicity and cultural background (Hesse-Biber, 1996; Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999).

In a variety of cultures, women experience dissatisfaction with their bodies and other problems related to body image. For example, European-American women possess a greater level of body image dissatisfaction than any other ethnic group (Hesse-Biber, 1996; LeGrange, Telch, & Agras, 1997). Another study conducted with Ukrainian women indicated their level of body image dissatisfaction; adoption of Western stereotypes concerning body ideals and the preoccupation with thinness results from the influence of the Western mass media (Bilukha & Utermohlen, 2002). In spite of such

well-documented studies, research in the field is limited, and therefore, additional studies are needed which include women from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999; Story, French, Resnick, & Blum, 1995). Research has also revealed that from cognitive-behavioral perspectives, sociocultural factors are seen as influential determinants of body image dissatisfaction (Cash, 2002). Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick & Thompson (2005) wanted to find out what factors mediate the relationship between sociocultural influences, (e.g. the media) of the “thin ideal” body shape, and the development of body image disturbances. They studied three sociocultural constructs, awareness, internalization, and perceived pressures from the media. Results revealed that they were all significantly associated with various measures of body image evaluation (Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick & Thompson, 2005).

Although the factors mentioned above affect body image, television is the most incessant transmitter (Gerbner & Gross, 1976; Hendriks, 2002). There is evidence to support the hypothesis that people who view the television over extended periods experience a significant change in their beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors (Lavine, Sweeney, & Wagner, 1999). The television has become such a dominant part of peoples' lives that the average American views approximately 4 hours per day (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003). Numerous studies have denoted that the heightening pervasiveness of body image dissatisfaction among women in Western countries may be the result of an escalated societal emphasis on thinness (Fallon, 1990; Heinberg, 1996). For many years, researchers have blamed the media for portraying thin, attractive female actresses as successful and educated individuals and; as a result, they have argued that such visual images create unrealistic expectations for young women, which may eventually cause body image dissatisfaction (Hendriks, 2002; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999).

Several studies investigate the influence of American media in promoting unrealistic images of thinness and beauty for women (Czajka-Narins & Parham, 1990; Harrison, 2003; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999). For example, although strong and voluptuous bodies were traditionally considered exquisite in Fiji, and people ate heartily at all times (Becker, 2004), eating disorders increased among teenage girls when satellite television was introduced (Becker & Burwell, 1999). In 1995, there was one television channel in Fiji that aired mostly American shows, such as “*ER*,” “*Xena Warrior Princess*,” and “*Beverly Hills, 90210*” (Becker & Burwell, 1999). Three percent of girls who viewed those programs reported vomiting to control their weight at the time the programs were being aired, and fifteen percent reported doing so three years later (Becker & Burwell, 1999). The researchers also stated that the interviewees adopted American thin and tall female celebrities as role models. Some admitted to engaging in strict dieting behaviors, to achieve body shapes like the celebrities (Becker & Burwell, 1999). Numerous studies similar to this one reveal not only the persuasiveness of television, but particularly the influences of American ideas of beauty (Barber, 1998; Brentl & Cantor, 1988; Fouts & Burggraf, 1999; Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz & Thompson, 1980; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2001; Nathanson & Botta, 2003).

Similarly, Bilukha & Utermohlen (2002) studied the body image, internalization of the ‘thin ideal’ portrayed in Western media, body dissatisfaction, and dieting practices among 616 urban Ukrainian women between the ages of 18 - 60 years old. Results of the study indicated that Ukrainian women’s exposure to Western mass media was significantly associated with body dissatisfaction, internalization of the Western stereotypes of the ideal body shape, and drive for thinness. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, citizens now have more access and exposure to Western mass media. To

date, researchers have not conducted any studies concerning body image and media effects in other post-USSR countries. (Bilukha & Utermohlen, 2002).

Caribbean people have traditionally associated voluptuous bodies with wealth, proper health, happiness, and beauty (Hoyos & Clarke, 1987). However, as countries like Trinidad become more modern, they begin to lose some of the social norms and values that have traditionally protected women from experiencing body dissatisfaction (Becker, 2004; Levine & Smolak, 1998; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999). As a result, there is a possibility that the traditional view about voluptuous bodies has changed, and Trinidadian women may have adopted the U.S. thinness-oriented norms portrayed on television (Simeon et al, 2003).

Trinidad is a Caribbean Island located to the farthest end of the Lesser Antilles, off the northeast coast of South America. This country underwent rapid social change throughout the years and its natural gas and oil resources have empowered it to become the Caribbean's most industrialized nation (Hamel-Smith & Company, 2009). The Government's economic policy is directed to the development of a strong and open market-driven economy; and, as a result, it is committed to stimulate foreign investment in the country. Presently, more than 90% of Trinidad's export earnings originate from foreign investment in the energy sector (Hamel-Smith & Company, 2009).

According to Bilukha & Utermohlen (2002), there is evidence to suggest that a significant relationship exists between Western mass media exposure and dissatisfaction with existing body shape among Ukrainian women. This quantitative study will examine whether similar results will hold true among Trinidadian women; thus, the goal of this study is to examine the correlation between American media exposure and Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction. A survey will be conducted to analyze the relationships between American media exposure, the awareness and

internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television, pressures to adopt these norms, and Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction.

Statement of Problem

Researchers associate body dissatisfaction and disordered eating behaviors with women (Thompson & Heinberg, 1999; Murnen, Smolak, Mills, & Good, 2003; Lavine, Sweeney, & Wagner, 1999). Studies show that 60% of high school females and 80% of college age women are unhappy with their bodies (Spitzer, Henderson & Zivian, 1999). This age group is at the highest risk for engaging in unhealthy eating practices and behaviors (Striegel-Moore, Silberstein, Grunberg & Rodin, 1990). These astounding statistics put young women at a higher risk for developing severe physical, mental, and emotional complications. Body image dissatisfaction plays a role in a woman's overall development, attitude, behaviors, and self-esteem as well as in women's daily lives. Body image is a key factor in self-image, and research links negative body image to women with low self-esteem (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002; Thomas, 1989). Body image concerns and sociocultural factors appear to play a critical role in the development of disordered eating. When women internalize the thin beauty ideal portrayed on television, there is a discrepancy between the ideal and their actual self. Since the ideal body shape becomes difficult to obtain, this results in body dissatisfaction for most women. Weight dissatisfaction, in turn, motivates rigorous behavioral efforts to lose weight or prevent weight gain (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002; Spitzer, Henderson & Zivian, 1999).

In spite of numerous studies regarding media effects on women's body image perception, the majority of the research focuses on Caucasian and African-American women. Although interest in cross-cultural studies of body dissatisfaction has increased

in recent years, research in the field remains limited (Jung & Forbes, 2007; Jung & Lee, 2006; King, 2006; Nasser, Katzman, & Gordon, 2001). Women from all cultures experience dissatisfaction with their bodies, especially women from countries with increased contact with Western nations (Mintz & Kashubeck, 1999; Story, French, Resnick, & Blum, 1995). As a result, women from other ethnic backgrounds need also to be the focus of research.

Caribbean researchers in the medical science field examined the prevalence of bulimic behaviors and eating attitudes among adolescents in Trinidad and other Caribbean Islands (Bhugra, Mastrogianni, Maharajh, & Harvey, 2003). However, these studies failed to take into consideration media effects on the participants' body image perception. The English-speaking Caribbean is exceptionally vulnerable, as it shares a common language with the United States (US) and the United Kingdom, the world's two largest producers of media content. Its geographical immediacy to the US facilitates television program importation. Tourism as a chief industry within the region leads to further interaction with Americans. Since many West Indians are residents in the US, connections become even more personalized (Brown, 1995).

There is a paucity of research with regards to the impact of American media on body image dissatisfaction among women in the Caribbean country of Trinidad. This study seeks to fill the literature gap within the mass communication discipline regarding the way Trinidadian adolescents react to body image satisfaction, and the impact sociocultural factors may have on it.

Rationale

There are several reasons why Trinidadian women should be the focus of this study. First, Trinidad's industrialization creates a situation where adolescents are exposed to the thinness-oriented norms portrayed in the Western media. When citizens from countries such as Trinidad experience such a phenomenon, the increase in exposure leads to heightened body dissatisfaction and the prevalence of eating disorders, especially in women (Dolan, 1993; Catina, Boyadijeva, Bergner, 1996). Trinidad's premier source of revenue originates from the local oil and gas industry and other manufacturing industries. As a result, this country is the most industrialized of the island states in the southern Caribbean (Imbert & Kochhar, 2004). When countries become more industrialized, their indigenous cultural sphere becomes heavily influenced by external aesthetics portrayed in the media. As a result, traditional norms and values become nonexistent (Strelitz, 2004). Over the last several decades, "global television programming has been a one-way flow from developed countries to less developed countries" (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974, p. 72). Television is the most significant carrier of Western popular culture (Lent, 1995) and young individuals all over the world spend countless hours in front of the television, and computer screens singing American pop songs, and mocking the fashion of the celebrities living in the developed countries (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974). Although adolescents living in third-world countries may be entrenched in the local culture, they still use globally-produced media messages as part of their pursuit to understand their lives (Strelitz, 2004). In addition, cable television is not considered a luxury item, but a necessity in most households in Trinidad (Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, 2009). Consequently, adolescents view the various American weight loss advertisements and movies that portray the protagonist as being thin, successful, and beautiful (Shaw, 2006). Within this context, it is crucial to examine

the effect of American media exposure of the Western ideal body shape on Trinidadian adolescents' body- image satisfaction.

Second, although both men and women are susceptible to idealized media images, women are chosen as participants in this current study because they are more vulnerable to the media's portrayal of body image (Thompson & Heinberg, 1999). Moreover, research has consistently shown that women are more concerned about their body weight, (Murnen, Smolak, Mills, & Good, 2003), perceive themselves as overweight, and strive to be thinner than men (Lavine, Sweeney, & Wagner, 1999). This study further narrows the focus to female adolescents attending secondary schools in Trinidad between ages 11 - 18 years. Secondary schooling in Trinidad is divided into two distinct cycles. The initial cycle is mandatory and lasts for five years for adolescents between the ages of 11 to 16 years. They begin their classes in Form 1, and in Form 5 they sit the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination. The subsequent cycles Form 6:1 and 6:2 is voluntary for 16 - 18 year old adolescents, who intend to pursue their studies at the University of the West Indies (UWI). This cycle lasts for two years, and after the second year, the students do the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). Depending on how well they perform in the exam, they will be accepted into the University (Dridi, 2004).

This age bracket was targeted for several reasons. First, adolescence represents a time of physical changes that are linked with changes in body image. It is arduous for adolescent females to incorporate these pubertal changes into a positively valued body image, as there is a serious concern about being beautiful (Rambaran, Austin, & Nichols, 2006). Second, numerous studies have revealed that young children and adolescent girls tend to be the most vulnerable to media images (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994; McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2001).

According to Hargreaves & Tiggemann (2003), media and social feedback have the greatest impact on adolescents between the ages of 13 - 15 years. Third, factors such as academic pressures, building and maintaining friendships, and attracting significant others, can cause pressures on adolescents to conform to the ideal body shape presented by the media (Grassi, 2001). Fourth, only a limited amount of studies in the Caribbean examine the issues concerning body image perception among Caribbean adolescents. As a result, hypotheses will be developed regarding American media exposure and other risk factors influencing Trinidadian adolescents' body image perception.

Importance of the Study

This study will further mass communication research in the area of media effects on adolescents' body image perception. There are a limited number of studies pertaining to the examination of the perception of Caribbean female adolescents with regards to the media and its effects. This topic deserves consideration since young females have reported that physical appearance and body weight are top on their list of worries and stresses (Brownell, 1991). Concern with body weight and appearance in most Western countries have become so common among women that many researchers describe it as normative behavior (Brownell, 1991). The drive for thinness in Western societies is a prominent issue and has led to this size being the norm (Tiggemann, 2002). This norm is culturally reproduced and maintained by a variety of influences on women's body image. Appearance has become so embedded in the minds of young females that they are spending less time on school work and social life, and more on enhancing how they look (Tiggemann, 2002).

Trinidad & Tobago's natural gas and oil resources have enabled it to become the Caribbean's most industrialized nation (Hamel-Smith & Company, 2009). When countries experience rapid social change, traditional norms and values that have protected women from experiencing body image dissatisfaction may have become diluted (Strelitz, 2004; Wolf, 1991). Out of 73 television channels in Trinidad, 10 are local stations and the rest are popular American cable stations such as USA, TNT, and CBS etc. (T & T television guide). Consequently, adolescents now view the ubiquitous American weight loss advertisements, sitcoms, movies, and music videos that portray the protagonist as being thin, successful, and beautiful.

Overview of the Study

Chapter two focuses on the literature most relevant to this topic, including the history of women's ideal body image, the traditional body image perception among females in the Caribbean, media influence on women's reaction to body self-image, and factors that mediate the relationship between the media and body image satisfaction. Although there are several theories that deal with the phenomenon of body self-image, this study applies the media imperialism, cultivation and social cognitive theory. Chapter three mentions the hypotheses, and chapter four addresses the methodology and research design. Chapter five reveals the results, which were further discussed in chapter six. Finally, the conclusion, along with suggestions for future research, and recommendations are included in chapter seven.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Women's Ideal Body Image

The idealization of a slender and thin body has not always been the norm in Western culture and, in fact, many years ago the position was the complete opposite (Lavine, Sweeney, & Wagner, 1999). In the Middle Ages, the 1600s to 1800s, plumpness was considered the ideal for women, and indicated high social economic status and good health (Lavine, Sweeney, & Wagner, 1999; Fraser, 1998). In the 1800s, women were considered sexy and attractive if they were heavy and had a layer of fat on their bodies, this meant that they had the money to eat well and were able to conceive children (Fraser, 1998). Women in the bourgeois (upper) class wanted to have more weight on their body in order to illustrate their class and health (Fraser, 1998). Weight on a woman indicated that her husband was successful, and they had sufficient money (Fraser, 1998). Women began to wear tight-laced corsets to enhance their bodies, which gave them the illusion of a curvy figure. These corsets made the waist unnaturally tiny while emphasizing the hips and buttocks (Lowe, 2003). In 1890, *Cosmopolitan* magazine listed the attributes of the most admired American women. They included golden hair, brown eyes, soft and smooth skin with olive tone, little color in cheeks, defined features, and a healthy, curvaceous body shape (Fraser, 1998).

However, by the end of the 1800s, food was not as hard to acquire, the plump size was no longer a sign of wealth and prestige, and the idea of thinness became popular (Fraser, 1998). During the early 1900s in America, the concept of counting calories and how to calculate ideal weights came into existence and could now be used

to control food intake (Austin, 1999). At the same time, the idealization of slenderness entered into Western culture and women began to use unhealthy and destructive behaviors to meet this unrealistic ideal (Austin, 1999). The ideal woman at this time was termed the Gibson Girl that artist Charles Dana Gibson had created (Zimmerman, 1997). This sketch was the epitome of a feminine ideal, with its tall, slender frame, tiny waist, and dainty features. This image was a change from the previous plump ideal. However, it was a constructed image and not a real woman that women were now trying to emulate (Austin, 1999). In the early 1900s, a new ideal image emerged, the flapper, which was a woman in a straight, slim dress that did not show hips or breasts (Fraser, 1998). In order to fit into this new fashion trend, women began to replace corsets with dieting, as this became the new way to control their bodies (Fraser, 1998).

During the 1920s, women were beginning to seek ways to control their weight through decreasing food consumption and increasing exercise (Fraser, 1998). At the same time, advertisers began the practice of manipulating women into thinking that products would change their lives and give them new freedom and liberation. Women were told they could now change their appearance with clothes, cosmetics, diets and exercise, and they were buying into this concept emotionally and economically (Fraser, 1998). According to one study, after World War II, 62% of high school girls reported dieting regularly, and 37% were currently on a diet. In addition, 15% were using diet pills and nine percent were on fasts (Dwyer, Feldman & Mayer, 1967). During the Great Depression of the 1930s, the flapper lost her popularity, as stronger, more mature ideals superseded her "male form." After World War II, women's magazines began promoting Christian Dior's new look, a small waistline which was achieved either by wearing corsets, girdles, waist cinches, or extreme diets (Zimmerman, 1997).

In the 1950s, although the slender model became the dominant image in all forms of media, and the amount of dieting and exercising undertaken to lose weight was increasing, size 16, voluptuous and curvy actresses/models started to become the beauty ideal. For example, Marilyn Monroe started the new trend in the 50s for curvaceous women (Frith, Shaw, & Cheng, 2005). However, she was soon replaced by the thin and meager female model Twiggy, who was five feet, six inches, and 89 pounds (Zimmerman, 1997). However, popular actresses such as Jane Fonda, Sophia Loren, and Catherine Deneuve still maintained the “perfect” hourglass shape (Zimmerman, 1997). In 1959, both the Barbie Doll and Playboy magazine were introduced, setting more unreasonable standards of beauty for women (Frith, Shaw, & Cheng, 2005). The Barbie Doll had large breasts, long blond hair, a tiny waist, narrow hips, and long legs. If Barbie were a real woman, she would have the measurements of 38-18-34 and would have a hard time standing straight up on two legs, so in theory Barbie’s body type can occur in “1 in 100,000” women. However, adolescents and women were determined to look like Barbie (Frith, Shaw, & Cheng, 2005; Norton, 1996).

Between 1970 and 1990, there was an overall emphasis on weight loss, and thinness was promoted continuously in Playboy magazines, as well as Miss America pageants as the ideal body shape (Barber, 1998; Rubinstein & Caballero, 2000). During the 1980s, although the thin body shape was still emphasized in the media, the ideal required a more toned and athletic looking appearance. This ideal became so severe and unrealistic, that without incorporating severe dieting, excessive exercising routines, surgery, and other unhealthy behaviors, women could not reach these standards (Harrison & Cantor, 1997). As a result, “women began to spend inordinate amounts of time, energy, and money in the pursuit of a lean and muscular body” (Brumberg, 1997, p. 123). By 1995, “American women spent \$100 million on ‘cellulite busters’ and

liposuction had become the most popular plastic surgery in the United States” (Brumberg, 1997, p. 127). Women still continue to spend excessive amounts of time and energy on attaining the perfect beauty standards that society has constructed (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2005).

The ideal body of the 1990s in America was a thin and large breasted one. Research has shown that larger breasts have been associated with a number of positive characteristics such as popularity and confidence (Thompson & Tantleff, 1992). The increasing number of women who get breast implants may reflect this relationship, and actresses such as Pamela Anderson of “Baywatch” set the standard for this beauty ideal (Tantleff-Dunn, 2001). At the start of the twenty-first century in American society, being thin is still the norm, even if it means using artificial means such as plastic surgery to achieve this body shape. This norm is still emphasized in the media (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2005).

Traditional Body Image Perception Among Caribbean Females

In 1983, researchers conducted the first study that dealt with African American women’s body image perception. They primarily looked at the body image concerns of immigrants from Africa to Great Britain and found that African women prefer to have a full and voluptuous body shapes (Furnham & Alibhai, 1983). Since then, other researchers conducted similar studies including African American women, and these all confirmed that African American women have a cultural tolerance for being overweight and obese as compared to European and Caucasian American women (Neff, Sargent, McKeown, Jackson & Valois, 1997; Celio, Zabinski & Wilfley, 2002). Similarly, the West Indian society has traditionally believed that gaining weight, or being overweight are signs of proper health, wealth and happiness. Therefore, underweight or extremely thin

female body shapes were associated with malnutrition, poor health, and poverty (Hoyos & Clarke, 1987).

The overpowering cultural and economic authority of the West and the success with which it has imposed Eurocentric values on subaltern population, especially through the media has had a considerable impact on the lives of black women throughout the Diaspora (Shaw, 2006). In Western culture, being white and thin has come to be the defining characteristic of physical attractiveness. Western ideas of what represents socially acceptable beauty fail to recognize both race and gender of subaltern populations; thus, making fatness and blackness physical characteristics that have traditionally limited the fat black woman from being considered beautiful, based on Western culture's definitions of beauty (Shaw, 2006). A pivotal allegorical figure that is central to the discussion of black female identity is "Mammy". Mammy represents an elusive point of identity, one that is not realized in today's society (Shaw, 2006). This mythical figure is defined as:

The first controlling image applied to African American women is that of the mammy - the faithful, obedient, domestic servant. Created to justify the economic exploitation of house slaves and sustained to explain black women's long-standing restriction to domestic service, the mammy image represents the normative yardstick used to evaluate all Black women's behavior (Collins, 1991, p. 71).

Mammy's large body signals an unbounded reserve of maternal dedication, suggesting the incapability of black women to be oppressed, since their supply of strength, love, and other emotional resources can never be depleted. Additionally, the association between fat and motherhood implies a predisposition, if not need, "to serve as a caretaker, which in turn implies a sadomasochistic element of desire and fulfillment

in black women's experience of economic abuse and marginalization, and mitigates moral responsibility on the part of her abusers" (Shaw, 2006 p. 20).

The Caribbean culture has traditionally appreciated the black woman's voluptuous body. For example, the myth of Jamaican folk hero Grandy Nanny of the Maroons, who could allegedly stop the bullets from the white soldiers with her buttocks. This myth positions Grandy Nanny's fatness, which is represented by her buttocks, as not only palpable but as a "form of neo-colonial resistance" (Shaw, 2006, p. 78). The fat black woman's body is set side by side with images of material wealth in both literary and popular representations. The strong black woman's body is often presented as an icon for material profusion in contrast to the African Diaspora's historical bequest of material loss, economic oppression, and deprivation in multiple arenas. Moreover, within the context of a "postcolonial culture's poverty stricken economic landscape, fatness becomes a form of neocolonial currency that signifies wealth despite the presence of national and racial indicators of economic decline and atrophy" (Shaw, 2006, p.81). The voluptuous body shape continues to maintain its social and iconic acceptability throughout the African Diaspora despite the widespread imperatives of slenderness. This acceptability is because of the legacy of slavery to which the body is attached. This legacy is epitomized by loss, including the loss of homeland, the loss of self-autonomy, and the loss of loved ones through the sale and dispersion of slave families and later through immigration (Shaw, 2006).

In a thesis that concentrates on body size one of the most meaningful "historical demarcations of loss is the deprivation of food to which slaves were subjected" (Shaw, 2006, p. 9). In the Caribbean, a significant portion of the slaves' food supply was imported from the American colonies, and when this supply was interrupted because of natural disasters such as hurricanes, slaves would sometimes starve to death

(Ferguson, 1999). Furthermore, Caribbean slave rations, which usually consisted of preserved fish or meat along with some type of grains, did not supply adequate calories or nutrients, and slaves were often deficient in calcium, vitamin A, and thiamine. The poor nutritional content of this diet made slaves susceptible to diseases such as rickets, beriberi, and scurvy (Kiple & Kiple, 2000). This may be one of the reasons why there is a lower incidence of eating disorders among black women, and why they have fewer anxieties pertaining to body image (Shaw, 2006).

The Thin Successful Female vs. the Voluptuous Successful Female

The portrayals of thin females on American media have often been associated with positive qualities such as beauty, success, and popularity (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Hendriks, 2002). This portrayal gives average women the impression that they must look this way in order to be successful (Forbes et al, 2001). When young girls all over the world have access to popular television programs such as Grey's Anatomy, Sex and the City, Friends, etc. which portray thin females as educated, and successful individuals, they will start to equate being thin with being intellectual and successful (Nathanson & Botta, 2003). Most American prime-time comedies under-represent the prevalence of heavyweight women (Hendricks, 2002). When shows portray overweight actresses, they are usually constantly ridiculed, and strive to lose weight on the show. They immediately become popular and the ridiculing stops, once they have lost the weight. This supports the stereotype that thinner is better, and women may start to believe this to be true (Hendricks, 2002). Based on the cultivation theory, television depicts these thin images as the norm even though this standard does not reflect the actual shapes and sizes of the average woman in Western society. The consistent portrayal of these thin images can alter a viewer's perception of reality. As a

result, viewers will hold unrealistic expectations of women's appearances (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Harrison, 2003).

In the Caribbean community, there are a number of successful, talented, popular, and wealthy voluptuous women, especially in the music industry (Shaw, 2006). Calypso is a music genre that has been historically associated with disruption and colonial resistance, which presents a perpetual challenge to neocolonial cultural norms (Shaw, 2006). This genre of music is especially linked to Trinidad's carnival festivities. A number of female Trinidadian calypsonians are extremely voluptuous in size. Calypsonian artists such as Calypso Rose, Singing Sandra, Lady B, and Tigress were successful, talented and popular voluptuous black women, whose full bodies reflected the seditious lyrics of their music, created the manifestation of their performance and aided in their success. In the 1980s, soca music emerged from Trinidad, blending calypso, African and East Indian rhythms. The soca beat is faster, jumpier, and more modern than calypso (Mendes, 2003). However, as time progressed, soca music became an expression of sexuality through metaphors, which was widely received throughout the Caribbean islands (Shaw, 2006). One of the most popular Trinidadian soca artists is Denise Belfon. Despite her extremely voluptuous body shape, she is well-known for her energetic performances. Her large size contributes to the spectacular nature of her performances as audiences are amused and amazed by the assuming incongruous juxtaposition of her energetic dancing capabilities despite her large body frame (Shaw, 2006). Belfon states, "People are always amazed at how a woman my size could move the way I do, so I believe many women respect me for that" (Shaw, 2006 pp. 120). Because of Belfon's singing and performance skills, she has received numerous recognitions in the soca arena (Shaw, 2006).

Throughout the Caribbean, the strong, voluptuous body is also regarded as a naturalization of access to resources, and certain large black women have become historical icons associated with financial opportunity and an abundance of nurturance (Shaw, 2006). Some of these successful women include Jamaican nurse, entrepreneur and writer Mary Seacole, and Barbadian lodging-house keeper Rachel Pringle (Shaw, 2006). In Trinidad, Ms. Marlene McDonald is a member of the House of Representatives and represents the Port-of-Spain constituency. This extremely voluptuous, yet successful and intelligent Trinidadian female was a teacher, lawyer, economist and also the Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs from 2007 to 2010 (Office of the Parliament, 2010). During the 2010 election campaign in Trinidad, McDonald made Trinidad media headlines, and not because of her intelligence or experience in politics, but because of her size. Someone had taken a picture of McDonald's face, and superimposed it on the body of an obese woman in lingerie. This picture was circulated throughout the Internet (Loubon, 2010). McDonald's response was:

This was not just an attack on myself but to all plus-size women. Judge me on my performance, my weight and size is not what I should be judged on. Those things are immaterial. There are women who are Miss Universe and Miss World material and can't perform (Loubon, 2010).

Although the Caribbean society has traditionally associated voluptuous bodies with wealth, good health, and happiness, the younger generation may think differently about this concept. In 2001, researchers examined the perceptions of body size among male and female adolescents in Trinidad, and tried to verify whether ethnic differences existed. The participants included 1,139 secondary students between the ages of 14-17 years old. The ethnic groups included Africans (25%), East Indians (49%), and other (23%). Overweight African-Trinidadian adolescents were satisfied with their size, and

less inclined to lose weight than overweight adolescents of other ethnicities. Thin Indian-Trinidadian adolescents were contented with their thin size, in comparison to the other thin adolescents. When the participants were asked which body size they equated to wealth, good health, and happiness, the majority of students associated obesity with wealth, and a slim or normal body shape to good health and happiness (Simeon et al, 2003).

Media Influence on Women's Reaction to Body Self-Image

Women rely on television and fashion magazines to determine beauty and, as a result, the emphasis the fashion magazines and media place on being thin are a key factor that may encourage body image dissatisfaction among women (Thomas, 1989; Morrison et al, 2004). Instead of reflecting on cultural values, the mass media are dominant contributors to expectations and social norms and have been a gauge of what is normal (Anderson & DiDomenico, 1992). According to Pipher (1994), we live in a "look-obsessed, media-saturated, 'girl-poisoning' culture" (Pipher, 1994). Pipher further blames the media for advocating standards of beauty and thinness that are unattainable for most women.

Messages about the "ideal" female form are transmitted through mass media and are a prevailing force for influencing social attitudes. Sociocultural pressures play a prominent role in the pervasiveness of body satisfaction in contemporary Western society. Over the past few decades, occurrences of body dissatisfaction for women have overlapped with changes in socio-cultural norms. Today, the "ideal" female portrayed in media is thin, tall, and long-legged. This portrayal gives average women the impression that they must look this way in order to be successful (Forbes et al, 2001).

With a considerable level of body image dissatisfaction and even eating disorders among females, numerous researchers claim that the media are, indeed, a

powerful contributor to the propagation of the idea that a thin body shape is desirable (Forbes et. al, 2001). Almond (2000) states that although many factors might contribute to eating disorders and body image dissatisfaction among women, the blame should be placed mostly on media. Botta (1999) writes:

The media indeed has an impact on body image disturbance, both directly through body image processing, and indirectly by encouraging adolescent girls to endorse a thin body shape, making them believe that those distorted shapes the media portrays are actually realistic (p. 25).

Several studies have shown that women tend to compare themselves to idealized images portrayed in media on a regular basis. According to Ritchins (1991), 50% of women in a study compared themselves with the models in advertisements half the time or more, and these advertisements made them dislike their body structure. Research further connected pessimistic self-evaluations with the process of reading fashion magazines (Ritchins, 1991).

Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance (Awareness, Internalization, and Perceived Pressures)

Throughout the years, numerous researchers have delved into body image disturbance research, and have identified many risk factors for the development of these conditions (Field, 2004; Stice & Hoffman, 2004; Pruzinsky & Cash, 2002). Risk factors such as negative verbal comments from family members and peers, psychobiological risk factors, i.e. early physical maturation, low self-esteem, and media images and messages all contribute to body image dissatisfaction among women (Thompson & Stice, 2001). However, there are mechanisms that mediate the relationship between media images of the “thin ideal” and the development of body image dissatisfaction (Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick, & Thompson 2005). Various scholars have studied three

factors linked to perceived influence of cultural and social factors, in regards to their association with body image attitudes: awareness of a thin ideal in the media, internalization of a thin ideal, and pressures to be thin (Stice, 2002; Thompson & Stice, 2001). These three constructs have progressed as the most frequently assessed risk factors related to a thin ideal of beauty (Cafri et al. 2005).

Awareness of the thin ideal has been defined as the “simple knowledge that a standard exists” (Thompson & Stice, 2001, p. 182). Other researchers have defined it as “an index of simple acknowledgment of societal appearance norms, as opposed to internalization of the standards” (Thompson, Van den Berg, Roehrig, Guarda & Heinberg, 2004, p. 294). Internalization of the thin ideal is the “incorporation of specific values to the point that they become guiding principles” (Thompson et al., 2004, p. 294). Thompson and Stice (2001) defined internalization as “the extent to which an individual cognitively buys into societal norms of size and appearance, to the point of modifying one’s behavior in an attempt to approximate these standards” (p. 181).

Several measures of awareness and internalization and its role in the development of body image disturbance and eating disorders have been constructed (Thompson et al., 2004). The Ideal-Body Stereotype Internalization scale was developed by Stice and colleagues in 1994. This scale assessed personal stereotypes linked with having a thin body shape (Cafri et al., 2005). Since this scale only measured the internalization factor of sociocultural influence, Heinberg, Thompson, and Stormer (1995), constructed the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ). This measure is based on exploratory factor analytic methods that distinguished between awareness and internalization of sociocultural ideals (Cafri et al., 2005). Heinberg, Thompson, and Stormer (1995) proposed that an awareness and/or internalization of sociocultural ideals regarding physical attractiveness could mediate the

relationship between media exposure, body image, and eating disturbance. The difference between awareness and internalization is evident if a person compares a typical awareness item, “People think that the thinner you are the better you look in clothes,” to an internalization item, “I wish I looked like a swimsuit model” (Heinberg et al., 1995). However, results of exploratory factor analyses of the SATAQ support the distinction between the two subscales (Heinberg et al., 1995; Thompson et al., 2004). According to Cafri and colleagues, “the evolution of the terms awareness and internalization within psychodynamic theory may lead to the belief that the awareness factor is simply measuring processes that are in conscious awareness, whereas internalization is assessing some more latent self-schema” (p. 422).

Researchers later found that perceived pressures to be thin was another significant factor that should be considered when assessing sociocultural issues (Cafri et al., 2005). Stice, Nemeroff, and Shaw (1996) developed the Perceived Sociocultural Pressure Scale, which measured perceived pressures to be thin from friends, dating partners, family, and the media. Many versions of the SATAQ were developed, and finally Thompson and colleagues decided that the SATAQ should be updated. Subsequently, they developed the SATAQ-3, which comprised of internalization of the thin ideal (general and athletic), pressures and information (Thompson et al, 2004). The awareness dimension was discarded from this version. According to Thompson (1999), the awareness dimension showed little relationship to body image evaluation.

The creators of the SATAQ-3 studied 175 female college students, and the results revealed that the dimensions of internalization and perceived pressures shared over 50% of common variance, and the regression analysis indicated that only the pressures dimension accounted for unique variance in predicting body image dissatisfaction. However, they stated that the subscales in the SATAQ-3 still have

excellent convergent validity with measures of body image and eating disturbance (Thompson et al., 2004).

The results from a meta-analysis conducted by Cafri and colleagues indicated that all three risk factors (awareness, internalization, pressures) had statistically significant associations with body image dissatisfaction. However, internalization and perceived pressures had a significantly stronger correlation to body image than awareness (Cafri et al., 2005). Other researchers stated that, although the results from the meta-analysis indicated that the three constructs were intercorrelated, there is still uncertainty about how independent their relationships are to body image dissatisfaction (Cash, 2005). Results from other studies focusing on awareness, internalization and perceived pressures all showed that internalization has a stronger association with body image dissatisfaction; thus, being a more powerful predictor than awareness and pressures (Heinberg et al., 1995). Calogero, Davis, and Thompson (2004) studied 440 eating disordered patients, and the standard regression results revealed that not one of the three risk factors accounted for body image dissatisfaction. Miller and Halberstadt (2005) investigated the relationships among awareness and internalization of body perception, societal ideals, and media consumption for young adult New Zealand men and women. Results revealed that total media consumption was correlated with increased awareness and internalization of thinness ideals for both men and women; however, women reported significantly greater internalization of thin norms, were unhappy with their bodies, and wanted to be thinner (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005).

Since various studies revealed different results pertaining to the three risk factors, a clear conceptual framework that clearly explains how the constructs should relate to one another, and ultimately evaluate body image development should be developed (Cash, 2005). For example:

Media exposure should guarantee awareness of the norms and trends of cultural appearance standards, and without awareness, an internalization of the media mandates would be less likely (although peers and parents are certainly potent alternative sources of influence). One possible path would be that internalization of cultural standards leads persons to seek media information for important guidance and feedback, which over time instills the media with even greater power and perceived pressure to conform to the internalized ideas (Cash, 2005, p. 439).

Theoretical Framework

Media Imperialism Theory

“When it comes to culture generally and the media in particular, the issues for debate are relatively clear-cut, whatever the time scale: does access to the culture of the United States necessitate the weakening or destruction of the cultures of other less economically powerful nations, and if it does, is it a price worth paying?” (Hutchinson, 1997, p. 85).

The terms media imperialism (Lee, 1979), electronic colonialism (McPhail, 1987), cultural imperialism, cultural domination (Schiller, 1976), cultural synchronization (Hamelink, 1983), cultural dependency, enculturation and cultural penetration (Smith, 1980), all apply to the global entrepreneurial activities of transnational media and their perceived effects (Schiller, 1973). The media imperialism theory rose to prominence in the framework of the “call for a New World Information and Communication Order” by the developing world. The fundamental idea of this theory is that Western nations control the media throughout the world, and this notion was fueled by the “failure of the 1960s approaches to modernization and development through the rapid adoption of Western media technologies by developing nations” (Schiller, 1973, p. 272). When the media

imperialism theory was gaining prominence, cultural imperialists tested the assumptions of the theory, and results showed that Third World users of foreign media products are and will continue to be persuaded by the values ingrained in the content (Ogan, 1988; Sui-Nam Lee, 1988). Ogan (1988) defines media imperialism as “ a process whereby the United States and Western Europe produce most of the media products, make the first profits from domestic sales, and then market the products in Third World countries at costs considerably lower than those the countries would have to bear to produce similar products at home” (p. 94). This assumption is based somewhat on the notion that no periphery nation will ever be able to create its own media products (Tomlinson, 1991). Interestingly, most cultural imperialism studies have closely concentrated on the effects of American programming on local audiences as an experimental test of media imperialism (Land, 1992; Ware & Dupagne, 1994; Elasmir & Hunter, 1997). In addition to television, the media imperialism theory has been invoked with reference to the operations in the developing world of transnational news agencies, transnational advertising companies, conglomerates in print, and in the recording industry. This theory is also said to be reflected in the foreign ownership of media in the developing countries and the transfer of media conventions in print and electronic journalism (Brown, 1995).

Many scholars have suggested that the cultural autonomies of developing countries are under assault by media products from the developed world (Schiller, 1969; Tunstall, 1977; Hamelink, 1993). The issue of the imbalance of the flow of information was voiced at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) General Conference, and it was suggested that the mass media could become “vehicles for the domination of world public opinion or a source of moral and cultural pollution” (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974, p. 12). The emergence of new technology in some third-world countries has led many national leaders to express

concerns about national identity, and cultural sensitivity. This is because a voluminous amount of mostly American and western programming enters these countries (Lashley, 1995). In 1984, Tapio Varis documented the global flow of television programs, and it revealed that Latin America, the Caribbean and parts of Africa and Asia had the highest levels of imported content (Varis, 1984). In 1976, researchers examined the television schedules in the English speaking Caribbean countries of Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago, and found that 77% of the programming was foreign. In 1987, the study was conducted again and over 80% of the television programs were foreign (Dunn, 1995).

According to Sterling and Head (1987), constant exposure to American programming will drag emergent countries back into a dependent status. Researchers also argue that the United States' cultural and political influence globally gained strength from the dominance of American programs in less developed countries (Lashley, 1995). Surlin and Soderlund (1990) state:

The ex-colonial societies where indigenous values were already compromised by the disproportionate influence of the metropolitan culture, the impact of foreign values, especially television's distorted portrayal of US reality, may often exert a deleterious effect on the ability of a fragile indigenous culture to survive (p.7).

As mentioned previously, several studies found some erosion of cultural values and norms in favor of those emphasized on American television. These include the cultural impact of American media on the values of Filipino high school students (Tan, Tan & Tan, 1987), Korean college students (Kang & Morgan, 1988), Algonkian Indians (Granzberg, 1982), and the Inuit people (Coldevin, 1979). Similarly, numerous researchers argue it is plausible that foreign media products have a detrimental effect on the cultural values and national identity of the Caribbean people (Perez, 1975; Hosein, 1976; Lent, 1977; Brown, 1988; Yearwood, 1989). Hosein (1976) stated:

The influx of alien cultural material undermines any attempts to build a Caribbean culture, and it poses a significant threat to Caribbean cultural identity and that it demonstrates alien lifestyles that result in increasing desire for luxuries we cannot afford and do not need (p. 8).

According to Tunstall (1977), the United States is by far the most dominant communication power in the world. As a result, its norms and values can be easily spread internationally. Based on this, leaders and citizens from third-world countries are concerned about their countries becoming a part of the American media village. This is expressed repeatedly within the vulnerable Caribbean area (Lashley, 1995). Yearwood and Richards (1989) coined the term “cultural promiscuity” to describe the effects of foreign media on Caribbean people (p. 6). Jamaican sociologist Rex Nettleford described the powerful reach of foreign media as, “the hijacking of the region’s media, the invasion of the Caribbean people’s intellectual space and the cultural bombardment of the entire region by every means possible from North America” (Nettleford, 1993, p. 129).

In the late 1970s, media imperialism theory began to be challenged in communication literature. Read (1976) was among the first theorists to criticize the theory, asserting that dependency through media imports was nothing but a myth. He contended the impetus was economic expediency and that the profits, though significant, were not phenomenal. He also argued that it was mainly the elite in the developing world that had access to foreign media, which happens to be only a small amount of the population (Read, 1976). However, as Brown (1990) purports, it is the region’s elite who are the policy-makers and decision makers. As a result, their ready access to foreign media puts them alone at the greatest risk. One West Indian scholar stated that “a generation of West Indians has grown up watching Hollywood westerns, but West

Indians remain West Indians and never duplicated John Wayne (Hosein, 1976, p. 11). Based on this perspective, the impact of foreign media is believed to be exaggerated.

Critics describe media imperialism as a “pseudo-concept, something which can be used to explain everything in general about media in developing countries and hence nothing in particular” (Fejes, 1981, p. 282). Researchers also postulate the theory has no accurately defined propositions, which makes it extremely difficult to test. Consequently, the theory is simply descriptive and lacks explanatory or predictive power (White, 2001). Critics argue media or cultural imperialism is only definite and germane to the time it was proposed in the 1970s. We now live in a world of advanced communication technologies that facilitate a multi-directional flow of information between nations. Therefore, this theory no longer has the practical approach it had in the 1970s (White, 2001). The theory’s scope is extremely narrow, as it cannot be used to elucidate media relations between countries at different points in time. Although media imperialists argued that Western transnational media corporations dominate the media in some nations, critics insist the theory is not applicable in all present day situations (Sinclair, Jacka, and Cunningham, 1996). Rogers & Antola (1985) stated that Latin American telenovelas that are shown on the U.S. Spanish networks are an indication of “reverse media imperialism” (p. 77). This argument proves that media imperialism does not have an extensive scope, as it cannot be applied during different periods across diverse cultures (White, 2001). However, in the British Caribbean, between 75% and 90% of the television content comes from foreign sources; as a result, it may be argued that the flow is one-sided in some countries (Skinner, 1984).

Media imperialism theory is not as accurate as other mass communication theories (Chaffee, 1991, p. 7). According to Theodor Adorno, by establishing definitions, “thinking would be in accordance with traditional thought and that organizing things

according to rigid concepts is alien to dialectical thought” (Tar, 1977, p. 156). Critics contend a lack of precision does not help in theory building; therefore, scholarly attempts to build further knowledge becomes a confusing dialogue, which is far from being progressive (White, 2001). Based on the theory’s lack of precision and low scope, the theory does not have much utility. The purpose of a theory is to describe, predict, control, and explain a phenomenon. Based on this definition, although media imperialism has been used in many disciplines such as international relations, education, sciences, anthropology, history, sports, and communication, it only operates at the descriptive level, and does not have much predictive and explanative power (White, 2001).

Tracey (1985) argued that national audiences prefer their own local programs, and that they discriminate rather than slavishly pursue imported programs. Therefore, local produced programming can and does exceed the popularity of imported programs. The reader reception or reader response theory led to the paradigm shift in communication theory and research when it hypothesized that audiences were no longer passive consumers of media products but active ones. This challenged the media imperialism theory and heightened the debate (Tracey, 1985).

Surlin (1990) conducted a comparative study hypothesizing that: “the greater one’s television viewing and one’s viewing of American programs, the lower one’s cultural identity and consciousness” (p. 302) among American, Canadian, Jamaican and Montserratian youth. The study revealed that the participants were not “intimidated by the imperialist power of the media to affect their culture and/or personal relationships” (p. 314). His findings also indicated that the Caribbean participants were more interested in preserving their culture than their American and Canadian counterparts. This led him to conclude that the media imperialist paradigm should be rejected and that the uses and gratifications approach needs to be adopted when studying the impact of foreign

programming on local culture (Surlin, 1990). In the case of the Caribbean evidence suggests the imbalanced flow of cultural products from the North has been countered to some degree by the success of some Caribbean music with foreign audiences, more specifically reggae music (McCann, 1993; Nettleford, 1978; 1993; White, 1993).

The media imperialism theory was developed in the 1970s to explain the media situation as it existed at that time, which promoted a one-way, top-down transmission system from a dominant country to dominated country that theoretically gave rise to a passive audience, and a powerful media (Sengupta & Frith, 1997). We are now living in the technology age where advanced media are becoming widely available in the form of telecommunications, satellite technology, and computers which provide for greater interaction between sender and receiver. Subsequently, the media imperialism theory must be reevaluated as the advanced media slowly penetrates into developing nations (Sengupta and Frith, 1997; Chaffee, 1991; Tracey, 1991).

Trinidad & Tobago was the first country in the English-speaking Caribbean to introduce television technology. It did so at the same time that it gained independence from Britain in 1962, under the government of the People's National Movement (PNM). Around that time, Trinidad and Tobago Television (TTT) was the only state-owned television station, and then in 1991, two other privately owned stations CCN TV6 (CCN) and AVM TV4 (AVM) began their operations. TTT provided public service information, educational and entertainment programs; however, there was never any regulation of the amount of locally or foreign originated programming to be aired. Consequently, opting for cheaper overseas products, TTT's programming has been dominated by American fare. AVM and CCN provided a substantial amount of American programming as well, specifically from the ABC and CBS networks (Lashley, 1995).

According to Hoyos (1992) the television sets throughout Trinidad and Tobago were evenly distributed, unlike many other third world countries where the concentration of ownership of television sets were in the urban areas. In Trinidad alone, 273,000 television households were evenly distributed throughout the island, and approximately 820,000 adults out of a population of 1.1 million were served (Hoyos, 1992). Television viewing was widespread in 1992, and the situation became exacerbated as the three television stations at the time were competing with one another. Around that time with only three television stations, Trinidadians were bombarded with American programs (See Tables 1-6) and advertisements (Lashley, 1995). Many years ago, a study was done by the Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication (CARIMAC) and UNESCO, and it was reported that between 1976 and 1986 the amount of imported programming in Trinidad and Tobago rose from 71 to 89 percent (Brown, 1988). This situation has been exacerbated as Trinidad now has three cable companies that provide cable services at an affordable price to its subscribers throughout the island (Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office, 2010).

Western produced television programs are dominating a large part of the world (Nordenstreng & Varis, 1974). Schiller (1991) states that global television still plays a part in cultural domination in the 1990s because of the new delivery systems, such as communication satellites and cable networks. A study conducted in Belize, Central America showed support for the hypothesis that the amount of time an individual spends watching Western television shows is positively correlated with a person's attitude toward the consumption of Western products but negatively associated with a person's attitude toward the consumption of Belizean products (Oliveira, 1986).

With the consistent bombardment of foreign programming in Trinidad, the more the people are exposed to it, the greater will be the potential for influence (Lashley,

1995). The influence of Western television entertainment programming on the youth of Trinidad and Tobago has had disastrous effects in the past. An 11-year-old boy hanged himself in Trinidad, trying to emulate a stunt he saw in the movie "Hang Em High" on television. Another young Trinidadian child died when she tried to imitate a stunt that she saw on the "MacGyver" television series (Treavajo, 1992). In 1984 and 1987 studies pertaining to the impact of Western television program viewing on national allegiances were conducted in Trinidad and Tobago (Skinner, 1984; Skinner & Houang, 1987). The studies focused on social and psychological dependency, through a survey of 400 participants. In 1984, the study reported that 75% of Trinidadian's viewing time was devoted to American programming, 19% to local shows and 6% to British shows (Skinner, 1984). In both studies, American television viewing was positively correlated with the internalization of American values, appeal, dependency, and appreciation (Skinner, 1984; Skinner & Houang, 1987).

Television Program Schedules in Trinidad & Tobago in 1993 (Lashley, 1995)

Table 1: AVM Station (American programs are highlighted in yellow)

5:59 a.m.	Sign on	3.30 p.m.	Mr. Dress Up
6:00 a.m.	F.I.T.	4:00 p.m.	Fred Penner's Place
6:30 a.m.	ABC World News Now	4:30 p.m.	G.I. Joe
7:00 a.m.	ABC World News This Morning	5:00 p.m.	Police Academy
8:00 a.m.	Good Morning America	5:30 p.m.	Words, Books and Letters
10:00 a.m.	Neighbours	6:00 p.m.	Invention
10:45 a.m.	General Hospital	6:30 p.m.	Jeopardy
11:30 a.m.	ABC News Nightline	7:00 p.m.	The AVM Evening News
12:00 p.m.	The AVM Midday Show	7:30 p.m.	ABC World News Tonight
1:00 p.m.	The MacNeil Lehrer News hour	8:00 p.m.	Tarzan
2:00 p.m.	ABC Primetime Live	8:30 p.m.	The Oprah Winfrey Show
3:00 p.m.	Ebony Jet Showcase	9:30 p.m.	Movie: Blind Vision

Table 2: TTT Station

6:00 a.m.	CNN	4.30 p.m.	Style with Elsa Klensch
9:00 a.m.	Sesame Street	5:00 p.m.	Dateline
10:00 a.m.	Ministry of Education	6:00 p.m.	Santa Barbara
10:30 a.m.	CNN	7:00 p.m.	Panorama
12:00 p.m.	The Young and the Restless	8:00 p.m.	Murder She Wrote
1:00 p.m.	Generations	9:00 p.m.	Secrets
1:30 p.m.	Showbiz Today	10:00 p.m.	Supertime
2:00 p.m.	Crossfire	11:00 p.m.	Cricket Highlights
2:30 p.m.	Documentary	11:30 p.m.	Panorama (late night edition)
3:00 p.m.	CNN		Sign Off
3:30 p.m.	Sesame Street		

Table 3: CCN Station

5:00 a.m.	Up to the Minute	6:00 p.m.	Wheel of Fortune
6:30 a.m.	TV6 News	6:30 p.m.	TV6 News
7:00 a.m.	CBS Morning News	7:15 p.m.	Caribbean Evening
8:00 a.m.	CBS This Morning	8:00 p.m.	Tour of Duty
10:00 a.m.	Channel America	9:00 p.m.	Infovision Feature
4:06 p.m.	Sign on/Prayer	9:30 p.m.	The Bold and the Beautiful
4:10 p.m.	700 Club	10:00 p.m.	CBS Evening News
4:40 p.m.	Another Life	10:25 p.m.	European Football
5:05 p.m.	The Price is Right	11:20 p.m.	Channel America

Television Program Schedules in Trinidad & Tobago in 2011

(www.flowtrinidad.com)

Table 4: CNC 3 Station (American programs are highlighted in yellow)

5:30 a.m.	Caribbean Newsline	1:00 p.m.	CNN Live
6:00 a.m.	Headline News	1:30 p.m.	Movie
6:15 a.m.	Early Morning Show	3:30 p.m.	On the Menu
7:00 a.m.	Headline News	4:00 p.m.	Hannah Montana
7:05 a.m.	Early Morning Show	4:30 p.m.	Let's Talk Tobago
8:00 a.m.	CNN Live	5:00 p.m.	Glee
9:00 a.m.	On the Menu	6:00 p.m.	Oprah Winfrey
10:00 a.m.	Iron Chef	7:00 p.m.	CNC3 News
11:00 a.m.	CNN Live	8:00 p.m.	Warehouse 13
11:30 a.m.	Government Programme	9:00 p.m.	Nip/Tuck
12:00 p.m.	CNC 3 Midday News	10:00 p.m.	CNC3 Prime News
12:15 p.m.	Oprah Winfrey	10:30 p.m.	Showbiz Tonight
		11:30 p.m.	Government Programme

Table 5: TV6 Channel

6:00 a.m.	The Morning Edition	1.00 p.m.	Grey's Anatomy
8:00 a.m.	Explorations	2:00 p.m.	Curepe Pentecostal
8:30 a.m.	Bewitched	2:30 p.m.	What's New Scooby
9:00 a.m.	Sesame Street	3:00 p.m.	The Batman
10:00 a.m.	CNN News	3:30 p.m.	Teen Titans
10:10 a.m.	24	4:00 p.m.	Business Feature
11:00 a.m.	CNN News	4:30 p.m.	Code Lyoko
11:10 a.m.	Monk	5:00 p.m.	Becker
12:00 p.m.	News at Noon on 6	5:30 p.m.	Girlfriends
12:15 p.m.	Caribbean Newsline	6:00 p.m.	The Bold and the Beautiful
12:45 p.m.	Business Feature	7:00 p.m.	The TV6 News
		8:00 p.m.	Desperate Housewives

Table 6: CNMG Station

6:00 a.m.	Caribbean Workout	1.00 p.m.	Psychic TV
7:00 a.m.	The Crosby Show	2:00 p.m.	Caribbean Newsline
7:30 a.m.	JJ and Friends	2:30 p.m.	Government Programme
8:00 a.m.	First Up	3:00 p.m.	Caribbean Workout
8:30 a.m.	Belgroves Passages	3:30 p.m.	Friends
9:00 a.m.	Deliverance Temple	4:00 p.m.	The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
9:30 a.m.	IBG Phonics	5:00 p.m.	Wendy Williams Show
10:00 a.m.	Tempo on C	6:00 p.m.	Two and a Half Men
12:00 p.m.	C News at High Noon	6:30 p.m.	Caribbean Workout
12:10 p.m.	Ellen DeGeneres Show	7:00 p.m.	C News
1:02 p.m.	Government Program	8:00 p.m.	CSI-Miami

Cultivation Theory

“In terms of psychological influence, television might have little or no impact if only a few people pay relatively little attention to it. But the opposite is the case: just about everybody watches some television, it has almost universal appeal. The first basic principle of influence has to do with exposure. Although the relationship is not perfectly linear, in general the more exposure the more influence. Certainly, the more exposure the more potential for influence” (Condry, 1989, p. 4).

In the 1960s and 1970s, George Gerbner and his colleagues developed the cultivation theory in order to understand the impact that excessive television viewing could have on an individual's attitude and values. Cultivation theory also helps to explain how constant airing of ideas can affect audiences' understanding of social reality (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). Gerbner concentrated on media violence in his research, and the results affirmed that individuals who watch copious hours of television develop a distorted perception of the world (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999). Based on his research, Gerbner stated that the average individual watches about four hours of television a day, and heavy viewers watch more than six or seven hours. Based on cultivation, or the “teaching of a common worldview,” heavy viewers will eventually adopt the television reality as their own social reality (Thompson & Heinberg, 1999). Yearwood and Richards (1989) assert the potential of the mass media as a powerful force in social communication is evident. According to both authors:

It is the ideological dimension of mass media which comes through its programming, its themes and points of view that can have potent long term

influences on society. The media are capable of legitimizing ideas, personalities and a way of life as social norm (p. 1-2).

Gerbner discusses two significant elements of cultivation theory, resonance and mainstreaming. Resonance occurs when viewers are more inclined to accept television portrayals as trustworthy, as it strengthens their own personal life struggles (Hendriks, 2002). According to Gerbner, when a young girl's peers constantly ridicule her about her weight the television then acts as a strengthener when she sees popular programs portraying the protagonist as beautiful, successful, and, thin. The young girl will eventually believe that in order to be beautiful and successful, one must be thin (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). In contrast, mainstreaming materializes when the constant media messages portrayed on television persuade individuals who initially held disparate concepts about a particular issue. Their opinions now imitate the "new reality" that is universally represented on television. For example, when young girls all over the world have access to popular television programs such as Grey's Anatomy, Sex and the City, Friends, etc. which portrays thin females as educated, and successful individuals, they will start to equate being thin with being intellectual and successful (Nathanson & Botta, 2003).

Researchers usually apply cultivation theory to studies dealing with the effects of television violence. However, some researchers have applied the theory to understand eating disorders and body dissatisfaction (Czajka-Narins & Parham, 1990; Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Harrison, 2003; Hendriks, 2002). According to cultivation theory, the media's presentation of thin and attractive women can lead female viewers to hold unrealistic expectations for women's appearances (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003). Findings consistently reveal many women tend to distort their body image and that those with low body image satisfaction are influenced more by ideal media images (Hendriks, 2002). The portrayals of thin females have often been associated with positive qualities

such as beauty, success, and acceptance. As a result, women's inability to achieve the ideal body can lead to negative psychological problems such as increased body dissatisfaction and eating disorders (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Hendriks, 2002).

The ideal body is communicated and reinforced by many social influences such as peers, family, schools, athletics, and health care professionals (Groesz, Levine, & Murnen, 2001). However, one of the most aggressive purveyors of the thin ideal is the mass media. Although studies on the topic have usually centered on the media in general, a large body of literature has focused on the impact of print media, such as magazines and advertisements (Barber, 1998; Botta, 2003; Byrd-Bredbenner & Murray, 2003; Cusumano & Thompson, 1997). Furthermore, several studies delved into the impact of television viewing on body image dissatisfaction using cultivation theory (Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Harrison, 2003; Hendriks, 2002). Myers and Biocca (1992) conducted a study and found viewing as little as 30 minutes of television programming and advertising can change women's perceptions of their body shape and size. Ideas about having an attractive shape, the drive to be thin and dieting behaviors have been found to be related to television viewing for many females (Myers & Biocca, 1992; Levine, Smolak, & Hayden, 1994). Correspondingly, according to a study conducted by Thompson (1986), after viewing images of ideal bodies depicted in the media, 95 percent of women overestimate their body sizes and 40 percent overestimate one of four body parts, cheeks, waist, hips, and thighs, by at least 50 percent.

Previous studies indicate depictions of women in television programs and commercials demonstrate the pervasiveness of unrealistically thin female body images (Nathanson & Botta; Harrison, 2000; Hendriks, 2002). Although there are shows that portray larger actresses such as Roseanne and the Parkers, the majority tend to represent slender actresses. Several researchers documented how females on

television have become thinner over the years (Seid, 1989). In 1980, Kaufman reported that 12 percent of prime-time television characters were overweight. The findings also underrepresented the number of overweight individuals in the general population.

Silverstein, Perdue, Peterson, and Kelly (1986) stated that 5 percent of female television characters were rated as being heavy, while 69 percent of the characters were rated as being thin. According to Thompson and Heinberg (1999), these trends may be even more typical in television programs that are favored by younger women and adolescents.

Previous research reveals that women with eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia are more likely to be influenced by television images than those without these disorders (Hamilton & Waller, 1993; Murray, Touyz, & Beumont, 1996). Stice and his colleagues (1994) found a direct relationship between media exposure to thin models and eating disorder symptoms. They also found an indirect relationship between media exposure and ideal body stereotype internalization and body image dissatisfaction (Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw & Stein, 1994). Although the researchers warn that the results were based on television exposure through self-report data, the findings seem to support the cultivation theory effect that consistent depictions of ideal women in the media can distort viewers' perceptions of realistic body images (Stice et al, 1994).

In addition to the media's idealized norm, the constant exposure to television images of thin bodies can shape viewers' perceptions of overweight individuals. Some researchers argue that the idealization of thin characters can lead to negative stereotypes of overweight and obese people (Czajka-Narins & Parham, 1990; Greenberg, Eastin, Hotschire, Lachtan, & Brownell, 2003). Researchers who make this argument point out thinner actresses appear more often on television than overweight ones. As cultivation theory suggests, viewers immersed in television reality will be influenced by the stereotypes of overweight individuals that are frequently presented in

these programs. Consequently, overweight viewers may spend a great deal of time wrestling with weight as well as self-blame and self-loathing (Harris, Waschult, & Walters, 1990; Stager & Burke, 1982). Research demonstrates that exposure to the ideal body is linked to female audience members' desires to be thinner, and because of media's portrayals of thin females, the pursuit of thinness has become a social norm for numerous females (Schooler, Ward, Merriwether, & Caruthers, 2004; Hendriks, 2002). This is another reason why drastic ways of changing one's body, such as plastic and cosmetic surgery are considered normal today (Cash & Pruzinsky, 2002).

Social Cognitive Theory

In 1941, psychologists Neal Miller and John Dollard argued that in order for social learning to occur, imitation and identification must be present. They asserted that imitative learning occurred when observers were motivated to learn; when the cues or elements of the behaviors to be learned were present; when observers performed the given behavior; and when observers were reinforced positively for imitating those behaviors (Miller & Dollard, 1941). In 1962, a Canadian psychologist Albert Bandura expanded Miller and Dollard's social learning principle, and developed the social cognitive theory. This theory states that, "learning occurs through interaction with the environment that involves reciprocal causation of behavior, personal factors, and environmental events" (Bandura, 1994). The social cognitive theory initially focused on children, and during the 1960s, communication theorists noticed the increase in violence in society, and started focusing on the effect of media on exasperating violent behavior (Bandura, 1994). Although social scientists developed numerous theories describing the effects of media, social learning, social cognitive theory, aggressive cues, and priming

effects see media as a possible factor in increasing the likelihood of actual violence (Bandura, 1994).

Bandura's (2002) research on imitation and vicarious learning proposed the idea that individuals operate as triadic reciprocal agents. The triadic reciprocal agency of individuals is reflected in the interaction between cognitions, biological factors, personal factors, and the environment to assist in determining behavior (Bandura, 2005). The behaviors of individuals are not simply forced upon them by their environment but are bidirectional (D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971). The bidirectional interaction indicates that the environment contributes to behavior through the interaction of intrinsic constitutions (Bandura, 2002). Consequently, information from the environment is inputted and filtered through cognitive, biological, and personal factors. The social cognitive perspective supports the idea that each individual has the capacity to be self-organized, proactive, self-regulated, and self-reflective in order to be a contributor to the circumstances surrounding their life (Bandura, 2005).

Individuals demonstrate their intrinsic values and standards for living in the way they govern their behavior (Bandura, 1982). Behavior is selected by evaluating the discrepancy between the potential action and intended outcome before acting (Bandura, 2002). The challenge is identifying when one's behavior needs to be adjusted to reduce the discrepancy in outcomes (D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971). From this, it can be inferred that individuals are proactive in achieving self-satisfaction and reactive when the initial attempts fail to yield the appropriate results based upon internal standards (Bandura, 1982). Other ideas affecting an individuals' decision-making are forethought and self-reflection. Forethought is seen as the intentional calculation of behavior in order to reach a desired goal (Chang, D'Zurilla, & Sanna, 2004), and self-reflection involves the active verification of personal perception (D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971).

Before the verification of an outcome, the belief in one's personal capacity to execute an appropriate response is determined by his or her self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982). According to Bandura (2005), self-efficacy is defined as the judgment of an individual's capabilities to manage his capacity to be a triadic reciprocal agent. Assertive, confident behavior is the result of one believing in his personal ability to manipulate the cognitive, biological, and personal factors that form perception and interact with environmental events (Bandura, 1982). The sense of predictability and controllability enhances coping capabilities, which allows an individual to influence the environment and act as an agent of change for self and one's surroundings. Bandura (1982) clarified that behaviors are not a set, but combined courses of action that involve several purposes. These purposes address the demands of an individual's cognitive, biological, and personal factors. Self-efficacy not only involves knowing and understanding what to do, it includes the actual execution of the behavior (Chang, D'Zurilla, & Sanna, 2004). The execution of behavior requires continuous improvisation of several skills in order to manage a fluid environment (Bandura, 2005).

The social cognitive theory is based upon a bidirectional influence of man and environment mutually impacting each other (Bandura, 2002). There are three different types of environment: imposed, selected, and created (Bandura, 2005). Intrinsic factors such as cognitions, biological and personal factors operate to influence behavior (Bandura, 2002). Bandura further asserts that behaviors do not exist in isolation, but are demonstrated within a variety of social contexts, environment. For instance, the imposed environment is a physical and socio-structural place over which an individual has no control. However, the lack of control of a reestablished setting is not equivalent to being without power in one's surroundings (Bandura, 1982). In a bidirectional structure, an individual's influence on the imposed environment is in the interpretation and reaction to

their setting (Bandura, 2002). The interpretation of the surroundings is in the evaluation of potential rewards or punishment in the situation (Bandura, 2005). The selected environment is based upon what is identified as a resource from the situation. To illustrate the selected environment, an individual with high self-efficacy will consider the imposed environment, discover the opportunities in the surroundings, and function within the opportunities (Bandura, 1982). In contrast, an individual who exhibits low self-efficacy observes the same imposed environment, focuses on the problems and potential risks and functions in those problems and risks (D'Zurilla & Goldfried, 1971). Heightened self-efficacy allows individuals to create settings in which to function to affect the path taken and the outcomes (Bandura, 2005).

The social cognitive theory describes how individuals interact with their environment. Bandura (2002) acknowledged that individuals have the capacity to figure out for themselves how to function in their environment. Personal beliefs and values guide cognitive processing to select behavior, but the actual execution of behavior is governed by a person's self-efficacy. Social comparison and social cognitive theory states that women who most directly identify with models would most likely be affected by idealized images (Dunkley et al, 2001; Harrison, 1997, 2000; Harrison & Cantor, 1997; Hofschire & Greenberg, 2002; Waller, Hamilton, & Shaw, 1992). Thus, because most models are young women, young women are most likely to be affected, and would try to achieve the thin body size through dieting (Holmstrom, 2004).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The main purpose of this quantitative study is to examine American media exposure, awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television, pressures to adopt these norms, and their relations with Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction. This research will attempt to fill the literature gap in mass communication discipline regarding factors that influence the way Trinidadian female adolescents react to body image satisfaction, and contribute to the discussion of the media's impact on how females in general view their bodies.

The media has been criticized for playing a central role in disseminating the standard of the thin 'ideal body' to the public (Mazur, 1986). Previous studies have revealed that an increase in media exposure will cause an increase in levels of internalization of the thinness-oriented norms and values portrayed on television and, in turn increase body dissatisfaction among women (Dolan, 1993; Catina et al., 1996). Although sociocultural factors such as peers, parents, and the media are considered strong determinants of body image dissatisfaction, researchers have found that certain mechanisms mediate the association between sociocultural influences of the "thin ideal" portrayed in the media, and the development of body image concerns. Researchers' findings indicate that the three constructs (awareness, internalization, perceived pressures) are all significantly linked with body image evaluation (Cafri, Yamamiya, Brannick, & Thompson, 2005). Based on these studies, hypotheses were developed to

understand the relationship between the relevant variables among Trinidadian adolescents.

H1: There is a negative correlation between American media exposure and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H2a: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2b: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2c: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H3a: There is a negative correlation between the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3b: There is a negative correlation between the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3c: There is a negative correlation between the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

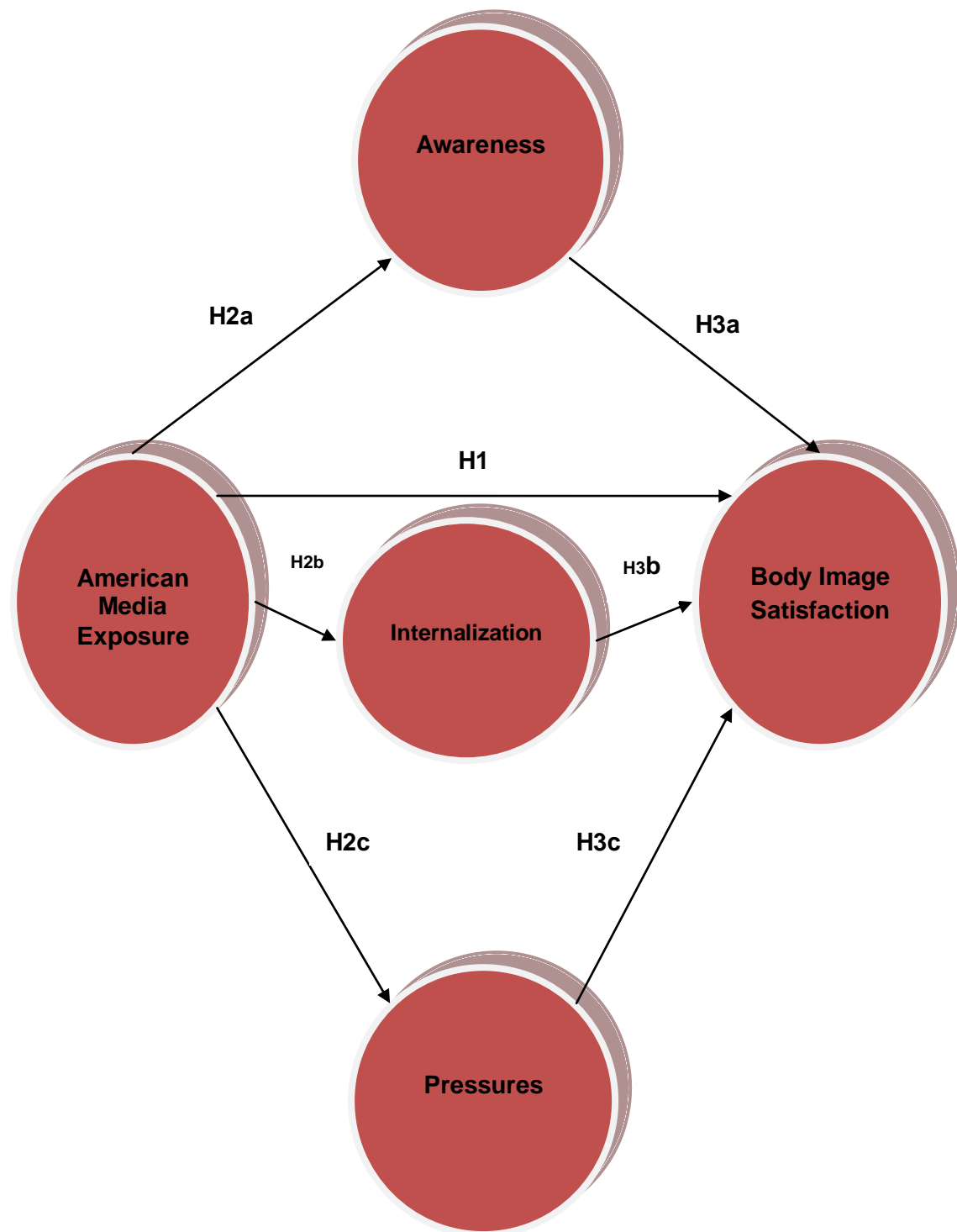


Figure 1: Hypotheses Model

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design and procedures used to test the hypotheses for this study, including the participants, instruments, and operationalization of variables. Cultivation, media imperialism and social cognitive theories were the theoretical frameworks applied to explore the correlation between American media exposure, awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television, pressures to adopt these norms and Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction.

Sample

A convenience sample of 600 adolescents attending six secondary schools in San Fernando, Trinidad, was used to collect the data in this study. In convenience samples, availability determines selection of participants (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey, 2008). Although results obtained from convenient samples have limited generalizability and cannot produce unbiased estimates of population parameters (Glass & Hopkins, 1996), there are circumstances when convenient samples provide useful information (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey, 2008). One such case is an instance where the variable under examination is only applicable to the individuals under investigation (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey, 2008). In this study, a convenience sample of the target population (young

female Trinidadians regularly exposed to the Western media) in an environment highly representative of the key individuals involved (adolescents ranging from 11-18 years old) is therefore justified. A further justification for the use of a convenience sample stems from limited resources required to compile a random sample.

Although the six schools were located only in the city of San Fernando; the sample represented the various secondary school systems in the country. Three of the schools, San Fernando East Secondary, San Fernando West Secondary, and San Fernando Central Secondary are co-educational and non-denominational schools. The other three were denominational, all girls' schools; Naparima Girls' High is a Presbyterian institution, St. Joseph Girls' Convent is Roman Catholic, and ASJA Girls' High is a Muslim school. One hundred students from each school participated in this study. They were in Forms 1 – 5 classes, with ages ranging from 11 to 18 years. The questionnaires were administered in the classroom, under the supervision of teachers.

Research Design

In order to test the hypotheses, survey research was employed for the study. Using a survey was appropriate for this study as it is inexpensive, efficient, and useful for gathering information from a population that is too large to allow every member to be questioned. The survey was constructed using previous scales designed by earlier researchers. The researcher also included demographic questions within the survey.

Instrumentation

The participants were given a survey consisting of questions from the "Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ)" and also the SATAQ-3 version (Heinberg, Thompson, & Stormer, 1995; Thompson, van den Berg,

Roehrig, Guarda, & Heinberg, 2004). The Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ) is a sub-scale that measures awareness, and internalization of American media norms and expectations for thinness. The SATAQ-3 is a revision of the first SATAQ. This version assesses internalization (thin ideal and athleticism), pressures, and information. The awareness subscale was dropped from this version; as a result, the awareness questions used in this study, were taken from the original SATAQ version. Questions pertaining to the internalization of the thin ideal and pressures to adopt a thin body shape was taken from the SATAQ-3 version. The survey also included other questions, which would provide information about the number of hours adolescents spend watching television, adolescents' satisfaction with their body image, age, height, ethnicity, current, and ideal body weight. The results of these questions allowed the researcher to correlate findings for the dependent, independent, mediator and moderator variables.

Design of the Study - Operationalization of Variables

The study will consist of the following measures for:

1. Independent variables: American media exposure.
2. Dependent variable: level of body-image satisfaction among Trinidadian female adolescents.
3. Mediator variables: awareness, internalization, and pressure
4. Moderator variables: age, current and ideal weight, height, ethnicity, TV time.

The variables below are presented with their corresponding hypotheses.

Independent Variable – American Media Exposure

H1: There is a negative correlation between American media exposure and Trinidadian adolescents body image satisfaction.

H2a: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2b: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2c: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

American media exposure was measured on an ordinal scale. Participants reported their frequency of watching American sitcoms, movies, and music videos on a scale ranging from “always” to “never” with “1” representing “never,” and “5” representing “always.” The participants also stated the amount of hours they spent watching cable television per day. The three American mass media sources (sitcoms, movies, and music videos), plus the amount of hours Trinidadian adolescents spent watching cable television constituted the American media exposure variable.

Dependent Variable: Body image satisfaction

H1: There is a negative correlation between American media exposure and Trinidadian adolescents body image satisfaction.

H3a: There is a negative correlation between the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3b: There is a negative correlation between the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3c: There is a negative correlation between the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

Body image satisfaction was measured on an ordinal scale. The researcher developed two questions to assess this variable. Question one asked the participants to indicate whether they are satisfied with their body shape, on a Likert type scale with responses ranging from "one" to "five," with "one" representing "very unhappy" and "five" representing "very happy." The second question asked the participants to rate their perceptions of their body size on a 5-point scale, from "one" to "five" with "just perfect" representing "five" and "too thin" representing "one." For the purpose of analyses, the sum of scores from the two questions formed a composite measure of body image satisfaction.

Mediator Variables – Awareness & Internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Pressures to adopt those norms

H2a: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2b: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H2c: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

H3a: There is a negative correlation between the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3b: There is a negative correlation between the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

H3c: There is a negative correlation between the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

Awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness and the pressures to adopt those norms will be measured on an ordinal scale. These variables will be measured by using the Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ) and the (SATAQ-3). The SATAQ was developed by Heinberg, Thompson, and Stormer, (1995), and comprises of two sub-scales that assess awareness and internalization. The awareness sub-scale measures the person's acceptance of the fact that thinness and beauty are greatly valued by the members of her own society. The internalization sub-scale measures the individual's desire to attain the slim 'ideal' body portrayed in the Western mass media (Bilukha & Utermohlen, 2002). Thompson, van den Berg, Roehrig, Guarda, and Heinberg, (2004), later developed the SATAQ version 3. This version assesses the internalization of the thin

ideal and athleticism, pressures, and information. The awareness subscale was dropped from this version.

The researcher used a Likert type scale with items answered on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Six of the questions that measured the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness were taken from the original SATAQ version. The seven questions that measured the internalization of the thin norms, and the other seven questions that measured perceived pressures to adopt those norms were taken from the SATAQ-3 version.

Moderator Variables

These variables were measured on a nominal scale. The survey included questions eliciting responses that indicated age, height, current and ideal weight, and ethnicity.

Data Analysis

A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC or Pearson r) was used to indicate the magnitude of the relationship between the relevant variables. The PPMCC is a “measure of the degree to which two quantitative variables (Likert/ratio) are linearly related in a sample (changes in one variable correspond to changes in another variable) (Wrench, Thomas-Maddox, Richmond & McCroskey, 2008). In order to conduct a Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC), one needs to obtain two scores (one for each variable) from each participant. Where there is a significant correlation coefficient (r), one can safely state that some type of relationship exists between the two variables. However, in the case where the correlation coefficient (r) is not significant, one cannot draw conclusions about the nature of the relationship between the variables. If a

correlation is established between two variables, this does not imply causation and therefore no assumptions of the sort can be made. In addition to the PPMCC analysis, multiple linear regressions were then conducted to determine the relative degree of contribution of a series of variables in the multiple prediction of a variable.

In this study, PPMCC and multiple regression analyses were used to correlate the following:

- a. American media exposure and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction
- b. American media exposure and the awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and pressures to adopt those norms
- c. The awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness and pressures to adopt these norms, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Data analyses for this study were performed using SPSS 19.0 for Mac. First, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (PPMCC or Pearson r) was used to indicate the direction, magnitude and statistical significance of the relationship between the relevant variables. Second, multiple regressions were conducted to further examine the nature of the linear relationship between the variables. The level of statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Respondent Profile

Tables 7 – 10 present the demographic characteristics of the participants. In the final sample, 100 female students from Forms 1 - 5 from each of the 6 schools participated in the study. The ages of the students ranged from 11 to 18 years and the mean was 14.2 (SD = 1.5). The current body weight for the 591 participants that answered the question were 121.3 pounds (S.D. 23.7), and the ideal weight for the 589 participants were 114.7 pounds (S.D. 16.3). The ethnic composition was as follows: Indo-Trinidadian (49.4%), Afro-Trinidadian (19.5%), Indo-Afro mixed Trinidadian (30.2%), and Spanish (8%). Table 4 provides classification for this composition.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics: Respondent Profile

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	600	7.00	11.00	18.00	14.1683	1.51012
Current Weight	591	180.00	70.00	250.00	121.2893	23.74053
Ideal Weight	589	90.00	90.00	180.00	114.7148	16.30972
Height	570	53.50	137.00	190.50	157.8561	8.59959
Valid N (listwise)	566					

Table 8: School Frequency

School	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
San F'do Central Sec. School	100	16.7	16.7	16.7
San F'do West Sec. School	100	16.7	16.7	33.3
San F'do East Sec. School	100	16.7	16.7	50.0
Naparima Girls' High School	100	16.7	16.7	66.7
ASJA Girls' High School	100	16.7	16.7	83.3
St. Joseph Girls' Convent	100	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Table 9: Class Frequency

Class	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Form 1	120	20.0	20.0	20.0
Form 2	120	20.0	20.0	40.0
Form 3	120	20.0	20.0	60.0
Form 4	120	20.0	20.0	80.0
Form 5	120	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	600	100.0	100.0	

Table 10: Ethnicity Frequency

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
East Indian	296	49.3	49.4	49.4
Mixed	181	30.2	30.2	79.6
African	117	19.5	19.5	99.2
Spanish	5	0.8	0.8	100.0
Total	599	99.8	100.0	
Missing System	1	0.2		
Total	600	100.0		

American Media Exposure

Table 11 presents the descriptive statistics for American media exposure. From the 600 participants, 466 of them had cable television. The mean score for cable hours were 2.28 (S.D. 0.530). Movie frequency had a mean score of 3.7 (S.D. 1.19), music video frequency was 3.6 (1.24), and sitcoms had a mean score of 3.3 (S. D. 1.34).

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics: American Media Exposure

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cable hours	466	2	4	2.28	.530
Sitcom frequency	600	1.00	5.00	3.2667	1.34110
Movie frequency	600	1.00	5.00	3.7267	1.18644
Music Video frequency	600	1.00	5.00	3.6367	1.24254
Valid N (listwise)	466				

Awareness, Pressure, and Internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness

Awareness, pressure, and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness was measured by using questions from the Sociocultural Attitudes towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ) and the (SATAQ-3). The researcher used a Likert type scale with items answered on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Six of the questions that measured the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness was taken from the original SATAQ version. The seven questions that measured the internalization of the thin norms, and the other seven questions that measured perceived pressures to adopt those norms were taken from the SATAQ-3 version. The Cronbach's Alpha for internalization, awareness, and pressure were 0.873, 0.792, and 0.893 respectively (Table 12), indicating acceptable levels of internal consistency.

Table 12: Reliability Statistics

Measure	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Awareness	0.792	6
Internalization	0.873	7
Pressure	0.893	7

Hypotheses Testing

In this study, the impact of the American media on Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction were measured on the dimensions of the amount of American sitcoms, movies, and music videos participants' view, the awareness and internalization of the norms, and the pressures to adopt these norms.

Hypothesis 1: There is a negative correlation between American media exposure, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationships between cable hours, sitcom frequency, movie frequency, music video frequency and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction. As hypothesized, the frequency of viewing American sitcoms and music videos were negatively correlated with body image satisfaction (sitcoms $r(600) = -.108$, $p < .01$), and music videos ($r(600) = -.128$, $p < .01$). That is, the more the participant viewed American sitcoms and music videos, the more dissatisfied she would feel about her own body image. However, the correlations between hours watching American cable, frequency of watching American movies and body image satisfaction were only marginally significant (cable hours $r(466) = .08$, $p = .071$; movies $r(600) = -.077$, $p = .06$). Hypothesis 1 was thus partially supported (See Table 13).

Table 13: Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure and Body Image Satisfaction

		Body Image	Cable Hours	Sitcoms	Movies	Music Videos
Body Image	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	600				
Cable Hours	Pearson Correlation	.084	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.071				
	N	466	466			
Sitcoms	Pearson Correlation	-.108**	.190**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000			
	N	600	466	600		
Movies	Pearson Correlation	-.077	.221**	.559**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.059	.000	.000		
	N	600	466	600	600	
Music Videos	Pearson Correlation	-.128**	.174**	.373**	.477**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.000	
	N	600	466	600	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis was then conducted to determine how well the American media exposure variables (i.e. cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency) could predict the criterion variable (body image satisfaction). Regression analysis revealed that the American media exposure variables were significantly related to the participants' body image satisfaction: $R = .15$, $F(4, 461) = 2.635$, $p = .034$ (See Table 14). R^2 for the model was .022 (adjusted $R^2 = .014$), indicating that approximately 22% of the variance of the participants' body image satisfaction could be accounted for by the linear combination of cable hours, sitcoms, movies, and music videos. Regression results further indicated that American cable viewing hours ($\beta = .106$, $t = 2.230$, $p = .026$) and frequency of viewing American sitcoms ($\beta = -.118$, $t = -2.131$, $p = .034$) were most predictive of body image satisfaction (see Table 15). In contrast, the predictive power of frequency of viewing American movies ($\beta = .052$, $t = .880$, $p = .380$) and music videos ($\beta = -.065$, $t = -1.266$, $p = .206$) were not statistically significant.

Table 14: Model Summary: American Media Exposure & Body Image Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.150 ^a	.022	.014	.94279

a. Predictors: (Constant), Music Videos, Cable hours, Sitcoms, Movies

Table 15: Regression Results: American Media Exposure and Body Image Satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	3.526	.234		15.090	.000
	Cable hours	.190	.085	.106	2.230	.026
	Sitcoms	-.085	.040	-.118	-2.131	.034
	Movies	.043	.049	.052	.880	.380
	Music Videos	-.052	.041	-.065	-1.266	.206

a. Dependent Variable: body shape

Hypothesis 2a: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure, and the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationships between cable hours, sitcom frequency, movie frequency, music video frequency and the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents. Correlation results indicated that, as hypothesized, awareness of American norms and expectations for thinness was positively correlated with cable hours ($r(465) = .146, p < .01$), frequency of viewing sitcoms ($r(599) = .199, p < .01$), movies ($r(599) = .209, p < .01$), and music videos ($r(599) = .214, p < .01$) (See Table 16).

Table 16: Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure and Awareness

		Awareness	Cable Hours	Sitcoms	Movies	Music Videos
Awareness	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1				
	N	599				
Cable hours	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.146**	1			
	N	465	466			
Sitcoms	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.199**	.190**	1		
	N	599	466	600		
Movies	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.209**	.221**	.559**	1	
	N	599	466	600	600	
Music Videos	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.214**	.174**	.373**	.477**	1
	N	599	466	600	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis was then conducted to determine how well the independent variables (American media exposure i.e. cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency) could predict the dependent variable (awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television). Results indicated that there was a significant, positive relationship between American media exposure and the participants' awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness ($R = .30$, $F(4, 460) = 11.23$, $p = .000$) (See Table 17). R^2 for the model was .089 (adjusted $R^2 = .081$), which indicates that approximately 89% of the variance of the participants' awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by the linear combination of cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency. Table 18 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), intercept, and standardized regression coefficients (β) for each variable. Of the four American media exposure variables, frequency of viewing sitcoms ($\beta = .123$, $t = 2.311$, $p = .021$) and music videos ($\beta = .133$, $t = 2.665$, $p = .008$) were the most predictive of participants' awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness, whereas the predictive power of cable hours ($\beta = .080$, $t = 1.739$, $p = .083$) and frequency of viewing movies ($\beta = .080$, $t = 1.532$, $p = .126$) were not statistically significant.

Table 17: Model Summary: American Media Exposure and Awareness

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.298 ^a	.089	.081	.80154

Predictors: (Constant), music video frequency, cable hours, sitcom frequency, movie frequency

Table 18: Regression Results: American Media Exposure and Awareness

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.186	.199		10.997	.000
	Cable hours	.126	.073	.080	1.739	.083
	Sitcoms	.078	.034	.123	2.311	.021
	Movies	.063	.041	.087	1.532	.126
	Music Videos	.093	.035	.133	2.668	.008

a. Dependent Variable: Awareness

Hypothesis 2b: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure, and the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationships between cable hours, sitcom frequency, movie frequency, music video frequency and the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents. As hypothesized, the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness was positively correlated with cable hours ($r(466) = .132, p < .01$), frequency of viewing sitcoms ($r(600) = .124, p < .01$), movies ($r(600) = .108, p < .01$), and music videos ($r(600) = .143, p < .01$) (See Table 19).

Table 19: Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure and Internalization

		Internalization	Cable Hours	Sitcoms	Movies	Music Videos
Internalization	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1				
	N	600				
Cable hours	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.132**	1			
	N	466	466			
Sitcoms	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.124**	.190**	1		
	N	600	466	600		
Movies	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.108**	.221**	.559**	1	
	N	600	466	600	600	
Music Videos	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.143**	.174**	.373**	.477**	1
	N	600	466	600	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine how well the independent variables (American media exposure i.e. cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency) could predict the dependent variable (internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television). Results indicated that there was a positive relationship between American media exposure and the participants' internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness: ($R = .18$, $F(4, 461) = 3.990$, $p = .003$ (See Table 20). R^2 for the model was .033 (adjusted $R^2 = .025$), which indicates that approximately 33% of the variance of the participants' internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by the linear combination of cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency. Table 21 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), intercept, and standardized regression coefficients (β) for each variable. Of the four American media exposure variables, only cable hours ($\beta = .103$, $t = 2.178$, $p = .03$) was the most predictive of participants' internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television, whereas the predictive power of the frequency of viewing sitcoms ($\beta = .092$, $t = 1.670$, $p = .096$), movies ($\beta = -.007$, $t = -.116$, $p = .908$), and music videos ($\beta = .074$, $t = 1.444$, $p = .150$) were not statistically significant.

Table 20: Model Summary: American Media Exposure and Internalization

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.183 ^a	.033	.025	.93644

a. Predictors: (Constant), Music Video frequency, Cable hours, Sitcom frequency, Movie frequency

Table 21: Regression Results: American Media Exposure and Internalization

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.808	.232		7.791	.000
	Cable hours	.184	.085	.103	2.178	.030
	Sitcoms	.066	.040	.092	1.670	.096
	Movies	-.006	.048	-.007	-.116	.908
	Music Videos	.059	.041	.074	1.444	.150

a. Dependent Variable: Internalization

Hypothesis 2c: There is a positive correlation between American media exposure, and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television among Trinidadian adolescents.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationships between cable hours, sitcom frequency, movie frequency, music video frequency and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents. Correlation results indicated that, as hypothesized, pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television was positively correlated with cable hours ($r(466) = .175, p < .01$), frequency of viewing sitcoms ($r(600) = .141, p < .01$), movies ($r(600) = .090, p < .01$), and music videos ($r(600) = .092, p < .01$) (See Table 22).

Table 22: Correlation Matrix: American Media Exposure and Pressures

		Pressure	Cable Hours	Sitcoms	Movies	Music Videos
Pressure	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 600				
Cable hours	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.175** .000 466	1 466			
Sitcoms	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.141** .001 600	.190** .000 466	1 600		
Movies	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.090* .027 600	.221** .000 466	.559** .000 600	1 600	
Music Videos	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.092* .024 600	.174** .000 466	.373** .000 600	.477** .000 600	1 600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine how well the independent variables (American media exposure i.e. cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency) could predict the dependent variable (pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness among Trinidadian adolescents). Results indicated that there was a significant, positive relationship between American media exposure and participants' being pressured to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness ($R = .21$, $F(4, 461) = 5.399$, $p = .000$) (See Table 23). R^2 for the model was .045 (adjusted $R^2 = .036$), which indicates that approximately 45% of the variance of the participants' being pressured to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by the linear combination of cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency. Table 24 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), intercept, and standardized regression coefficients (β) for each variable. Of the four American media exposure variables, cable hours ($\beta = .152$, $t = 3.241$, $p = .001$), and frequency of viewing sitcoms ($\beta = .126$, $t = 2.297$, $p = .022$) were the most predictive of participants pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, whereas the predictive power of movie frequency ($\beta = -.017$, $t = -.287$, $p = .774$), and frequency of viewing music videos ($\beta = .013$, $t = .253$, $p = .800$) were not statistically significant.

Table 23: Model Summary: American Media Exposure and Pressures

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.212 ^a	.045	.036	1.00666

a. Predictors: (Constant), Music Video frequency, Cable hours, Sitcom frequency, Movie frequency

Table 24: Regression Results: American Media Exposure and Pressures

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.509	.249		6.048	.000
	Cable hours	.295	.091	.152	3.241	.001
	Sitcoms	.098	.042	.126	2.297	.022
	Movies	-.015	.052	-.017	-.287	.774
	Music Videos	.011	.044	.013	.253	.800

a. Dependent Variable: Pressure

Hypothesis 3a: A negative correlation will exist between the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness portrayed on television, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationship between the awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction. As hypothesized, awareness ($r(599) = -.118, p < .01$), was negatively correlated with Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction (See Table 25).

Table 25: Correlation Matrix: Awareness and Body Image Satisfaction

		Body image	Awareness
Body image	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	600	
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	-.118**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	
	N	599	599

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 3b: There is a negative correlation between the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationship between the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction. Correlation results indicated that, as hypothesized, Internalization of American norms and expectations for thinness ($r(600) = -.399$, $p < .01$), was negatively correlated with Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction (See Table 26).

Table 26: Correlation Matrix: Internalization and Body Image Satisfaction

		Body image	Internalization
Body image	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	600	
Internalization	Pearson Correlation	-.339**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis 3c: There is a negative correlation between the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

This hypothesis was intended to examine the relationship between the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction. As hypothesized, results revealed that pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness ($r(600) = -.289, p < .01$), was negatively correlated with Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction (See Table 27).

Table 27: Correlation Matrix: Pressures and Body Image Satisfaction

		Body image	Pressure
Body image	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	600	
Pressure	Pearson Correlation	-.289**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	600	600

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine how well the independent variables (awareness, internalization, pressure) could predict the dependent variable (body image satisfaction). Results revealed that there was a significant relationship between awareness, internalization and pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness, and body image satisfaction ($R = .35$, $F(3, 595) = 28.312$, $p = .000$ (See Table 28). R^2 for the model was .125 (adjusted $R^2 = .121$) which indicates that approximately 13% of the variance of the participants' body image satisfaction could be accounted for by the linear combination of awareness, internalization, and pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness. Table 29 displays the unstandardized regression coefficients (B), intercept, and standardized regression coefficients (β) for each variable. Out of the three risk factors, internalization ($\beta = -.313$, $t = -5.133$, $p = .000$) was the most predictive power of participants' body image satisfaction, whereas the predictive power of awareness ($\beta = .09$, $t = 1.907$, $p = .06$), and pressures ($\beta = -.10$, $t = -1.592$, $p = .112$) were not statistically significant.

Table 28: Model Summary: Awareness, Internalization, Pressures, and Body Image Satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.353 ^a	0.125	0.121	0.90726

a. Predictors: (Constant), Awareness, Pressure, Internalization

Table 29: Regression Results: Awareness, Internalization, Pressures, and Body Image Satisfaction

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	4.404	0.156		28.148	.000
	Awareness	0.101	0.053	0.086	1.907	.057
	Internalization	-0.319	0.062	-0.313	-5.133	.000
	Pressure	-0.092	0.058	-0.095	-1.592	.112

a. Dependent Variable: Body Shape

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This study focused on Trinidadian female adolescents and the impact American media and other risk factors may have on their body image satisfaction. The sociocultural model for body dissatisfaction states that constant exposure to images of the thin body shape on television will lead to the awareness of the thin ideal, which in turn will lead to internalization of the thin ideal, and in turn, increased body image dissatisfaction (Dolan, 1993; Catina et al., 1996). In order for this model to be applicable to this study, the researcher had to ensure that the participants are exposed to American media. Results revealed that 78% of the Trinidadian adolescents in this study had cable television, and 76% of them watched television for 1 – 4 hours per day.

American media exposure and body image satisfaction

A considerable amount of literature documents the effect of media images on body image attitudes among adolescent females (Botta 2003; Hargreaves & Tiggemann, 2003; Harrison, 2000; Polce-Lynch, Myers, Kliewer, & Kilmartin, 2001). This present study predicted a negative correlation between American media exposure, and Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction. The collected data found partial support for this hypothesis, as there was a modest yet significant correlation between the variables. However, one can conclude that the more Trinidadian adolescents view American sitcoms and music videos, the more dissatisfied they would feel about their own body image.

A possible explanation for American sitcoms showing such statistical significance is due to the fact that these sitcoms are shown daily on the local stations, and adolescents who do not have cable make up this significance. Those individuals who have cable television probably got accustomed or addicted to certain sitcoms that they viewed on the local station before getting cable; thus, they would continue to view them on the cable stations. Also, according to Nathanson & Botta, (2003), when young girls all over the world have access to popular television sitcoms such as *Sex and the City* and *Friends*, which portray thin females as educated, and successful individuals, they will start to equate being thin to being intellectual and successful.

These findings are consistent with past research that dealt with body image development. In a study that focused on Australian adolescents, American program content was associated with self-reported body image dissatisfaction and drive for thinness (Tiggemann & Pickering, 1996). Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw and Stein (1994) also linked media exposure to increased eating disorders and body image dissatisfaction among female undergraduates. American music videos also predicted a larger cognitive and affective body self-perception among New Zealand women (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005). A study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago in the 90s investigated whether the high level of American media exposure has an effect on the psyche of the average Trinbagonian youth (Lashley, 1995). Although the study did not focus on body image issues, the results were rather interesting. The Trinbagonian youth that participated in the study agreed that the American entertainment programs have significant influence on them. They agreed that American programming influenced their style of speaking, the way they dressed, and their preference for American culture. The most astounding finding was that 74% of the participants longed to live the life he or she sees on American programming (Lashley, 1995). Caribbean researchers have argued in

the past, that the programming policies of the local television stations are to be blamed for the impact of American television on citizens, especially the adolescents (Brown, 1988; Hosein, 1976; Lashley, 1995; Surlin & Soderlund, 1990). However, the common argument to support the continued importation of American television programming in the Caribbean is the fact that economically it will not make sense to produce local programming (Lashley, 1995). The irony of this situation is that according to the study conducted by Lashley (1995), over 50% of the Trinibagonian youth did not care for local programs, and 85% of them preferred watching American sitcoms (Lashley, 1995).

American media exposure and Three Risk Factors

An interesting and important finding in this study was that an increase in American media exposure, resulted in the increase in Trinidadian adolescents' awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and also the pressures to adopt those norms and expectations. Although the three sociocultural constructs under study were all positively related to American media exposure, the correlation between American media exposure and awareness ($r = .30$) was significantly larger than that of media exposure and internalization ($r = .18$), but not significantly different from that of media exposure and pressures ($r = .21$). Further results revealed that 89% of the variance of the participants' awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by American media exposure, with music videos and sitcoms being the most significant. These findings are consistent with the study that was conducted among New Zealand women, as there was a significant correlation between American media consumption and the increased awareness of thinness ideals. Surprisingly, *Sex in the City* and *Friends* were considered influential television shows in the study (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005). According to Fouts and Burggraf (2000), women are constantly aware of the thin body shape in the media

because the actresses are almost always tremendously thin. They used the Figure Rating Scale (FRS) to code body shapes of actresses in popular prime time television sitcoms (e.g., *Mad About You*, *Friends*), and found that “76% had a body shape of 3 or smaller” (p. 926). The study conducted by Bilukha and Utermohlen (2002) failed to find similar results among Ukrainian women. Although the sociocultural model necessitates that awareness of the thin ideal is a prerequisite for internalization, in that particular study, the SATAQ sub-scale for awareness had a low Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.32, unlike this present study which had a high Cronbach’s alpha score of 0.79. The researchers believed that the low Cronbach’s score resulted from the three of the questions that were reversed keyed. The Ukrainian subjects may have perceived those questions differently. Another interesting point that the researchers raised, was the fact that all the questions in the awareness scale equated attractiveness with being thin. Although research has shown that Americans equate thinness to attractiveness, the Ukraine population may not hold that perception about beauty (Bilukha and Utermohlen, 2002). Since the present study had such a high Cronbach’s alpha score, this raises the question; does this Trinidadian generation now equate thinness to beauty? Traditionally, Caribbean people associated the voluptuous shape with wealth, success, beauty, and happiness (Hoyos & Clarke, 1987). However, Simeon and colleagues (2003), examined the body image perception among multi-ethnic Trinidadian adolescents as well; excluding the media and investigating other causal factors. That study produced important and relevant findings. The participants associated health, wealth and happiness with the overweight male; but only associated wealth with the overweight female. It is clear that the traditional beliefs about the voluptuous female may not be present among this generation of Trinidadian adolescents. These findings are all causes

for concern, and future studies should be conducted, in order to get a better understanding of this change in belief among Caribbean adolescents.

American media exposure was also significantly associated with the internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness among the Trinidadian adolescents. Further results revealed that 33% of the variance of the participants' internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by watching cable television. Similar to the previous results, although cable hours had a significant p-value, the beta weights for sitcoms and music videos still indicated a positive relationship with the internalization of the norms. The results that supported the previous hypothesis indicated that the participants were most aware of the thin norms when watching sitcoms, so according to the sociocultural model, internalization of those norms will then take place. Bilukha & Utermohlen (2002) also found that exposure to the products of Western mass media was significantly related to internalization of the Western stereotypes of the ideal body. In the study that examined the relationships among awareness and internalization of Western societal ideals, body perception and media consumption for young adult New Zealand men and women, although both men and women were equally aware of the importance society places on attractiveness and being thin, the women internalized the values significantly more (Miller & Halberstadt, 2005).

The study that developed and validated a revision of the Sociocultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ), examined media influences beyond internalization and awareness. As a result, the SATAQ-3 version was developed, which included the pressures and information sub-scale. The results from that study revealed that the pressures sub-scale "emerged as an important correlate of body dissatisfaction and eating disturbance, and as an independent predictor in regression equations"

(Thompson, Van den Berg, Roehrig, Guarda & Heinberg, 2003, p. 298). In addition, the study also revealed that samples of eating-disturbed and eating-disordered individuals scored the highest on the internalization and pressures sub-scales. In this current study, results revealed that there is a positive linkage between American media exposure and the pressures to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness. Further results indicated that 45% of the variance of the participants' being pressured to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by the linear combination of cable hours, sitcom, movie, and music video frequency. However, sitcoms and the overall time spent watching cable television were significantly related to the participants' being pressured to adopt the American norms and expectations for thinness. Based on the findings of this study, the more time Trinidadian female adolescents spend watching American sitcoms and music videos, the more they become aware and internalize the thin ideal, and then feel some type of pressure to adopt a thin body shape.

Three Risk Factors and Body Image Satisfaction

The most important finding from this study was probably the finding that the more Trinidadian female adolescents are aware and internalize the American norms and expectations for thinness; they will then feel pressured to adopt those norms, which in return will result in a decrease in their body image satisfaction. Although the three risk factors under study were correlated with the participants' level of body image satisfaction, internalization of the thin ideal showed the most significance. It is noteworthy to mention that all internalization items contained phrases such as "I would like my body to look like," "I wish I looked like," "I compare my body," and "I try to look like."

These findings are consistent with the majority of past studies, as many researchers have stated that internalization is a potential mediator between exposure to television images and the development of body image disturbances (Cusumano & Thompson, 2000; Thompson & Heinberg, 1999; Thompson et al., 2004; Sands & Wardle, 2003; Smolak, Levine & Thompson, 2001). When Thompson and colleagues developed and validated the SATAQ, although convergent validity was established for both the awareness and internalization subscales, internalization scores accounted for significant variance above and beyond awareness scores. Researchers concluded that internalization of societal standards of physical beauty are strongly related to body image and eating disturbance (Thompson et al., 2004).

Another study provided additional support for the mediating effects of internalization in the relationship between media exposure and body dissatisfaction. The researchers assessed the relationship between media exposure and eating pathology, and examined the possible mediating effects of gender-role endorsement, ideal-body stereotype internalization, and body dissatisfaction. Covariate structure modeling techniques revealed a direct influence of ideal body stereotype internalization on body dissatisfaction. However, the results did not indicate a direct relationship between media exposure and internalization of the thin ideal body shape (Stice, Schupak-Neuberg, Shaw & Stein, 1994). That was also the Trinidadian female adolescents in this present study.

The fact that awareness and body image satisfaction lacked a strong statistical significance among the Trinidadian participants, supports the argument proposed by the authors of the SATAQ-3. Thompson and colleagues discarded the awareness dimension from the SATAQ assessment. They stated that the simple recognition of sociocultural appearance norms lacks strong statistical relationship to body image

evaluation (Thompson et al., 1999), and that it lacks factor analytic support (Thompson et al., 2004). According to Cash (2005), “being aware that appearance matters in our culture is not the same as a personal internalization of beauty norms or feeling pressure to conform to these expectations” (p. 439).

Taken as a whole, results from this study causes some concern. Numerous researchers have argued against the cultural essentialism inherent in the media imperialism thesis, and that the notion of globalization has replaced the imperialism model as the main way of thinking about the international media. The problem is that the majority of scholars who criticize the media imperialism theory, and believe that countries are now internally homogenous and the concept of “one-way” flow no longer exists, all operate at a very theoretical level, and lack proper evidence about countries they are discussing (Sparks, 2007). Results from this present study may have supported findings from previous studies dating as far back as the 70s, which proved that global television programming is a one-way flow from developed countries to less developed countries (Nordensteng & Varis, 1974).

For many years, Trinidad & Tobago and many of its Caribbean neighbors have been academically positioned as a cultural receiver and not a cultural producer (Miller, 1992). This positioning has historical origins. During the 1930s in Trinidad, women often tried to dress like their favorite foreign movie stars. This type of mimicking was the driving force for scholars to focus on Caribbean mass media (Lent, 1977, 1990; McFarlene-Alvarez, 2007; Warner, 2000). According to those studies, historically, Caribbean mass media and even Caribbean people suffered the consequences of over a century of hegemonic cultural domination. Colonization left the Caribbean islands vulnerable, and then they easily fell prey to the powerful influence of their Western hegemonic leader, the United States. This is how media imperialism became a concern

for many, as the United States clearly had dominance over international broadcasts (McFarlene-Alvarez, 2007). Since the early part of the 20th century, media critics and researchers have judged the Trinidad and Tobago mediascape as being heavily influenced by external aesthetics and media messages. According to Brown, (1987) “post-Independence mass media in Trinidad and Tobago can be described as enjoying freedom, but not true independence from imperial forces” (p.180).

The central question remains, would the media in Trinidad and Tobago and the rest of the Caribbean ever depart from the cycle of U.S. dependency? What is the reason for the lack of indigenous programming and this constant dependency on the U.S. for television programming? Although the Caribbean has a rich cultural heritage which fuels a prospering theatre industry, there are reasons why this source has not been utilized. The common problems that have been identified include the relative inexpensiveness of foreign imports, limited resources, the programming policy of the local stations, and most importantly, the lack of government support to foster an industry that will keep producers and talent gainfully employed (Brown, 1995). Unfortunately, many countries are not able to produce enough of its own entertainment to fill all the programming needs of citizens. The day that this becomes possible, hopefully the foreign dependency cycle will finally end.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study sought to investigate the impact of American media exposure on Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction. Based on previous research, it was hypothesized in the study that the three risk factors under study, awareness, internalization and perceived pressures will mediate the relationship between American media and body image satisfaction among Trinidadian female adolescents. All the hypotheses were supported, as the findings indicated that the variables were significantly related; however, strong statistical significance did not occur between all the variables.

Correlation results indicated that the more hours Trinidadian female adolescents spent watching American sitcoms, the less satisfied they are with their body image. American sitcoms and cable hours had a stronger relationship with body image satisfaction than American movies and music videos. An increase in American media exposure also resulted in the increase in the adolescents' awareness and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, and also the pressures to adopt those norms and expectations. However, there was a stronger correlation between American media exposure and awareness, as 89% of the variance of the participants' awareness of the American norms and expectations for thinness could be accounted for by watching American music videos and sitcoms.

The results from the final hypothesis supported the sociocultural model for the development of disordered eating and body image dissatisfaction. Results indicated that the more Trinidadian female adolescents are aware and internalize the American norms

and expectations for thinness; they will then feel pressured to adopt those norms, which in return will result in a decrease in their body image satisfaction. Moreover, there was a stronger correlation between internalization of the thin norms, and body image satisfaction.

Limitations of the Study

Although the study presented findings that highlighted the relationship between American media exposure, the awareness, and internalization of the American norms and expectations for thinness, pressures to adopt these norms portrayed on television, and Trinidadian female adolescents' body image satisfaction, there were several limitations, which prevents the generalization of the findings.

The study was limited to secondary students attending six schools in the city of San Fernando, with only 100 students participating from each school. Because of this limitation, this study only pertained to the above convenience sample; therefore, this sample cannot be construed as representative of the Trinidadian adolescent population as a whole. The data collected was self-reported; as a result, although the researcher should take the adolescents' responses at face value, it may contain several potential sources of bias and inaccuracies. Although there were no refusals in completing the questionnaire, the adolescents could have been reluctant to reveal the true way they felt about their body shape.

Another limitation is that only a moderate amount of variance was accounted for by the predictors, which may imply that other pertinent factors were not measured in this study. Other influential factors should be measured in order to provide a more extensive explanation about body image dissatisfaction among Trinidadian adolescents. Additionally, given that the development of body image dissatisfaction occurs over a period, a longitudinal study would better indicate the directionality of the relationships.

Suggestions for Future Research

Despite the limitations of this study, the results raised a number of issues that future research should address. Results from this study revealed that the American media has some sort of power in shaping Trinidadian adolescents' body image perception. Research has shown that even minimal exposure to the thin ideal on television can lead to, or enhance body image dissatisfaction, depression, and emotional distress among females. As a result, a longitudinal study should be conducted among Trinidadian females. This study only used questions from the Socio-cultural Attitudes Towards Appearance Questionnaire (SATAQ), and although studies have proven its validity, future research should utilize additional measures of body image to strengthen the findings.

Numerous studies have indicated that media plays an influential role in shaping body image dissatisfaction among adolescents. However, there are other factors that contribute to such a dynamic. This study assessed only three constructs - awareness, internalization, and pressures - that have been considered strong moderators of body image challenges. In spite of the fact that participants were asked to indicate their current and ideal weight, this study did not assess the impact of body weight in the results. Additionally, this study fails to identify the body shape considered most ideal by Trinidadian females, i.e., the voluptuous body shape that Caribbean people traditionally associated with health, wealth and happiness, or the American thin body shape. It also fails to specify whether Trinidadian adolescents now equate thinness with health, wealth, happiness and success. As such, future directions for research involve investigation of the role of the media in the development and transformation of Trinidadian adolescents' conceptions about body weight and perceptions of ideal body shape.

This study considered Trinidadian adolescents in the area of San Fernando and therefore is limited by geographic constraints. Future research conducted in other schools based in urban areas of Trinidad such as Port-of Spain, Arima and Chaguanas, may serve as a basis for comparison with the students from schools in this study. When considering the school factor, it may also be necessary to determine the role of school type in the results. For example, the results for adolescent females attending co-educational, all-girls, denominational and non-denominational schools may be compared to gauge differences in their perception of body weight and body shape based on socialization practices and effects of the media among adolescents in these schools. These comparisons may help to identify school variables which play a more significant role in development of Trinidadian adolescent females' perceptions about body image.

Future research should also examine the effects of other types of media that promote the thin ideal on Trinidadian adolescents' body image perception. Although this study concentrated on television, other forms of media are influential in portraying the "thin is beautiful" message, and also contribute to body dissatisfaction among females. For example, the prevalence of social networks among Trinidadian adolescents ascribed to increased access to the internet and mobile phones presents a framework from which to define the impact of the media. Indicators such as time spent on social networks, quality of messages relayed, predominant uses of the internet and reliance on the internet for shows displayed on the television are variables whose impact on Trinidadian adolescents, need to be clearly defined. Much is to be gathered about these constructs if future research focuses on analysis of the correlation between variables inherent in social media networks and Trinidadian adolescents' body image perception.

Although this study focused on Trinidadian female adolescents, differences in age and gender may affect the quantity and quality of materials viewed on the television.

It is true that research has shown that younger females compare their bodies to television images, but it has not been determined whether older viewers engage in similar practices. Popular shows such as CSI, Criminal Minds, Desperate Housewives, all portray thin, successful, beautiful actresses, and handsome, muscular actors. As a result, future research should be expanded to focus on Trinidadian men and women of a variety of ages and how they respond to such images, taking special consideration to highlight the differences between and among seniors, adults and adolescents. Since Trinidadians have been underrepresented in this specific area of research, future studies should analyze this demographic, and investigate whether body image dissatisfaction remains constant throughout a person's life.

Lastly, since there has been such a high level of dependency on the U.S. television programming, an analysis on the entire history of Trinidad's broadcasting system should be conducted to facilitate an understanding of the development and structure of television programming in the country. Moreover the ongoing challenges to indigenous television production in the country should form a basis for investigation. Since Trinidad is now considered the most industrialized of the island states in the southern Caribbean (Imbert & Kochhar, 2004), future research should analyze whether the constant argument of local programming production being expensive still holds true in 2011. Researchers should also investigate whether local citizens will prefer local shows as opposed to U.S. shows. Although this may not be applicable to this study's research about body image satisfaction, the programming policy and the lack of support from Trinidad's government may be the underlying reason for the importation of foreign shows such as *Sex and the City*, *Friends* etc., which in turn may have a possible impact on Trinidadian adolescents' body image satisfaction.

Recommendations

Culturally appropriate prevention strategies need to be developed in Trinidad schools to try to prevent the development of low self-esteem, body image dissatisfaction, and to even reinforce the traditional cultural perspective about beauty. There should also be a focus on proper nutrition, and exercise. Adolescents need to understand that the purpose of exercising and eating healthy is not to get to a size 0, and resemble celebrities on television, but instead, understand its importance in preventing them from obtaining certain diseases, increasing their energy, and most importantly, lead to improved academic performance. Since Trinidadian adolescents view the American sitcoms, movies and music videos on television regularly, these interventions should focus on critical evaluation of media messages. At some point in a young woman's life, she needs to learn how to deconstruct media messages, become more skeptical of media images, and even reject media manipulations. By doing this, women may be able to consciously avoid subconscious internalization of images seen on television. If women can prevent themselves from engaging in social comparison, it is less likely they would be influenced by media images. Furthermore, these intervention programs should teach Trinidadian adolescents, both boys and girls, how to evaluate themselves in multidimensional ways, rather than solely based on physical appearances.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Consent

University of South Florida

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Protocol Title: Trinidadian Female Adolescents' Perception on American Television Shows

Please read this consent form carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Thank you for taking time to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary, and there is no penalty for refusal to participate.

The answers from this questionnaire will assist the researcher in completing a Masters thesis, with the intention of filling the literature gap in the Mass Communication discipline.

You may terminate completion of this survey at any time if you feel uncomfortable by the content of the questions. You may also refuse to answer a question(s) if you choose. Furthermore, the information you contribute is **private** and **confidential**. Other than the researcher, no one else will have access to the completed questionnaire. In addition, to protect your confidentiality, you are not required to write your name on the survey.

There are no known risks associated with this study, and there are no direct benefits to you for your participation.

The eIRB # for this study is 3394, and if you have any concerns, feel free to contact the School Supervisor, Mrs. Pereira at the Ministry of Education at 868-XXX-XXXX. Or you can contact the IRB department at the University of South Florida at 813-XXX-XXXX. You can also contact the researcher Clarabelle Ferguson at 813-XXX-XXXX.

Once again, thank you for your participation.

Appendix 2: Survey

Instructions: Please read each statement carefully and honestly CIRCLE the answer that applies to you. Your response will remain completely confidential.

- 1) Do you have cable television at home? YES NO
- 2) If you answered yes to the above question, approximately how many hours do you spend watching cable television per day?
- a) 0
b) 1 – 4 hrs
c) 5 - 10 hrs
d) 10 + hrs
- 3) How often do you watch American sitcoms?
- | | | | | |
|--------|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Very often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 4) How often do you watch American movies?
- | | | | | |
|--------|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Very often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 5) How often do you watch American music videos?
- | | | | | |
|--------|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Always | Very often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Based on your personal feelings, state whether you agree, or disagree etc. with the following statements. Circle the appropriate answer.

- 6) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
- 7) At times I think I am no good at all.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
- 8) I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

- 9) I am able to do things as well as most of my friends.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1
- 10) I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5
- 11) I certainly feel useless at times.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5
- 12) I feel that I am a person of worth, when compared to others.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1
- 13) I wish I could have more respect for myself.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5
- 14) All in all, I am inclined to feel like a failure.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5
- 15) I take a positive attitude towards myself.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1
- Circle the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement. The questions that mention "TV" refers to American television shows.
- 16) Attractiveness is very important if you want to get ahead in life.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1
- 17) I have felt pressure from TV to lose weight.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1
- 18) I do not care if my body looks like the body of people who are on TV.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5
- 19) I compare my body shape to the body shape of people who are on TV.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1

20) It's important for people to work hard on their figures/physiques if they want to succeed in today's culture.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

21) I do not feel pressure from TV to look pretty.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

22) I would like my body to look like the models who appear on television.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

23) I compare my appearance to the appearance of TV and movie stars.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

24) Most people do not believe that the thinner you are, the better you look.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

25) I have felt pressure from TV shows to be thin.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

26) I would like my body to look like the people who are in movies.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

27) I have felt pressure from TV to have a perfect body.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

28) I wish I looked like the models in music videos.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

29) I have felt pressure from TV to go on a diet.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

30) I have felt pressure from TV to exercise.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

31) People think that the thinner you are, the better you look in clothes.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
5	4	3	2	1

32) I have felt pressure from TV to change my appearance.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1

33) I do not try to look like the people on TV.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5

34) In today's society, it is not important to always look attractive.
 Strongly Agree 1 Agree 2 Neutral 3 Disagree 4 Strongly Disagree 5

35) In today's society, fat people are regarded as unattractive.
 Strongly Agree 5 Agree 4 Neutral 3 Disagree 2 Strongly Disagree 1

Please honestly answer the next 7 questions. Keep in mind your answers will remain confidential.

36) Age _____

37) What is your ethnicity _____

38) What is your overall class grade/percentage _____

39) What is your current weight (lbs) _____

40) Ideally how much would you like to weigh (lbs) _____

41) What is your height _____

42) How do you consider your body shape?
 Just perfect 5 Too fat 4 Average 3 Thin 2 Too thin 1

43) How satisfied are you with your body shape?
 Very Happy 5 Happy 4 Neutral 3 Unhappy 2 Very unhappy 1

THE END!!

THANK YOU & HAVE A GREAT DAY!!